

IN THESE TIMES

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PAGE 9

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PRIMARY CONCERNS

On the road
with Jesse Jackson
in Iowa

David Moberg reports, page 6

If you liked Bork,
you'll love Siegan

PAGE 2

Upscale upstarts
Broadcast News and Wall Street

PAGES 20 & 21



Bernard H. Siegan

If you liked Bork you'll love Siegan

By John B. Judis

WASHINGTON

Bernard H. Siegan's nomination to be a judge in the 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals had languished in Senate Judiciary Committee files for nine months before a preliminary hearing was held November 5. According to a knowledgeable lobbyist, committee Democrats held up Siegan's confirmation hearings because they feared that after Siegan aired his views, Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork would appear to be a moderate.

CONTENTS

The Inside Story: And you thought Bork was a nut	2
Test of conscience—American Jews and Israeli policy	3
In Short	4
Primary questions—Jesse Jackson in Iowa	6
The state of the black movement	8
Canada's year of living dangerously	9
Zimbabwe—Political healing, but wounds remain	10
France—military-industrial complexities	11
Poland—between Moscow, Washington and Rome	12
Editorial	14
Letters/Sylvia	15
Viewpoint: Is Nicaraguan revolution up for grabs?	16
Ashes & Diamonds by Alexander Cockburn	17
Life in the U.S.: Getting a kick out of the NFL playoffs	18
In Print: Poster modernism and the WPA	19
In the Arts: Miles Davis moves in mysterious ways	20
Network failure and <i>Broadcast News</i>	20
Up against the <i>Wall Street</i>	21
Classifieds/Life in Hell	23
Tom Wayman on the job—writing about work	24

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Siegan is a liberal's nightmare. He opposes every significant Supreme Court ruling since 1926, including *Brown vs. Board of Education*. In his recent writings, he urges the court to use the 14th Amendment to block economic regulations, from minimum wage laws to zoning restrictions. (Siegan once wrote an article entitled, "No zoning appears to be the best zoning.") At the same time, he opposes the use of the 14th Amendment to guarantee equal protection for women and voting rights for minorities.

The battle over Siegan's confirmation to the 9th Circuit, which covers the Western U.S., is expected to flare up next month when the Judiciary Committee resumes its hearings. It will be the next test of the Justice Department's attempt to institutionalize Reagan conservatism through the courts.

Abusing the Constitution: Like Bork and former Supreme Court nominee Douglas Ginsburg, the 63-year-old Siegan graduated from the University of Chicago Law School, where he became a follower of its free-market-oriented law and economics school of thought. From 1949 to 1973, Siegan was a real estate lawyer and developer in Chicago, frequently arguing cases in which he had a financial stake. In 1973, he moved to San Diego, where he remained in real estate, but also began second careers as a professor of constitutional law at the University of San Diego and as a columnist for the right-wing *Orange County Register*.

Siegan, like Bork and other right-wing jurists, claims that his constitutional interpretations are based upon the "original intent" of the document's framers. But Siegan's views on race, religion, freedom of the press and economic regulation go considerably beyond those of Bork and other right-wingers.

Racial integration: In the 1954 *Brown* decision rejecting segregated schooling, the Supreme Court relied on the post-Civil War 14th Amendment, which forbade states from denying "any person within its jurisdiction equal protection of the laws." Siegan argues that the 14th Amendment should apply only to "natural" rights and not to the "political" rights created by government. According to Siegan, education is not a "natural" right. "There is no fundamental natural right to education, nor to an integrated education; each is a political right created by government and accordingly is not within the guarantees of the 14th Amendment," Siegan wrote in a 1985 essay. Of the *Brown* decision, Siegan wrote in 1987, "For strict constructionists, the moral authority proffered in justification for the change did not overcome the immorality of constitutional abuse."

Freedom of the press: The Supreme Court has traditionally interpreted the First Amendment phrase, "Congress shall make no law," to mean "the government shall make no law," but Siegan, with no historical evidence, claims that the First Amendment guarantees on freedom of the press apply only to acts of Congress and not to acts of the executive. He insists that in 1971, the Nixon administration was justified in trying to block publication of the *Pentagon Papers*, a secret Defense Department history of the Vietnam War. In sharp contrast to Bork, Siegan also argues that the Supreme Court erred in requiring evidence of malicious intent and not simply falsehood in libel cases brought by public figures. The court's ruling diminished "the integrity of public communication," Siegan wrote.

Economic regulation: From 1890 to 1937, the Supreme Court used the section of the 14th Amendment that forbade states from depriving "any person of life, liberty or property without due process of law" to knock down the income tax and government regulation of business, including child-labor and minimum-wage laws and the initial provisions of the New Deal. The court argued that these laws deprived persons, including corporations, of liberty of contract without sufficient justification. In 1937, the court abandoned this approach and allowed regulations to stand as long as there was a reasonable basis for their existence. Siegan wants to return to the *status quo ante*. "When the Supreme Court late in the last century ruled that the due process clause of the 14th Amendment safeguarded economic freedoms from infringement by the states, it was in all probability carrying out the will of the amendment's framers," Siegan wrote in 1982.

In a debate published in 1986 in the *San Diego Law Review*, Bork took issue publicly with Siegan's constitu-

tional economics. He objected to Siegan's insistence on extending "judicial review...to all economic regulations." "Of minimum-wage laws, I am quite certain how I would vote as a citizen or a legislator on each of these statutes," Bork wrote, but "I have not the remotest idea how one would go about constructing a philosophy that would give the necessary answers to judges."

Fetuses as corporations: On other questions, including freedom of religion and the right of abortion, Siegan simply takes the right-wing position, but his reasoning is invariably his own. Siegan argues that in applying the Bill of Rights to the states, the 14th Amendment covered free exercise of religion, but not the prohibition against making laws "respecting an establishment of religion." The 14th Amendment only applied to "rights," and the establishment clause does not describe a right. Therefore, the Supreme Court erred in ruling state school prayer ordinances unconstitutional.

Like other proponents of original intent, Siegan's use of constitutional history is idiosyncratic. He argues that the purposely ambiguous 14th Amendment did not apply to school integration, because there was no public school system in the Confederate states. But of course one can argue on the same grounds that it didn't rule out school integration. He claims original intent for his anti-regulatory interpretation of the 14th Amendment even though the first generation of jurists to interpret the amendment failed to take this view.

In justifying his rejection of the Supreme Court's 1973 *Roe vs. Wade* decision that made abortion legal, Siegan reached new heights of absurdity. The Burger Court argued that a three-month old fetus did not enjoy the same constitutional rights as a person, but Siegan, citing the early 20th century court's treatment of corporations as persons, insists that one need not be a person to have the rights of a person. "Inasmuch as corporations are invested with guarantees of personhood under the 14th Amendment, extension of the definition to include the fetus cannot be regarded as a breach of an existing pre- and post-natal line of distinction," Siegan writes.

Ancient history: In his initial confirmation hearings,

INSIDE STORY

Siegan's performance made even Bork's "confirmation conversion" look credible. Siegan attempted to deny that his views would have any bearing whatsoever on his practice as an Appeals Court judge. When Sen. Dennis DeConcini (D-AZ) asked Siegan about this statement that the 14th Amendment does not pertain to education or voting rights, Siegan responded, "I am speaking in that sentence as a historian."

When DeConcini asked him about his statements about the religious establishment clause, Siegan replied, "I am really commenting now as a scholar." When DeConcini asked him about his interpretation of economic regulations contained in a 1987 book, Siegan replied, "Well, Senator, this is ancient history."

Siegan claims that as an Appeals Court judge he would stick to his appointed task of trying to discern how the Supreme Court would rule on a particular case. "It is essential that an Appeals Court judge follow completely what the law of the land is, as interpreted by the Supreme Court," Siegan told the committee. But committee Democrats and groups like People for the American Way are concerned that there are still too many gray areas in which an Appeals Court judge can uniquely affect the law. For instance, the Supreme Court allows the Appeals Court to settle most controversial zoning and land-use cases.

The former real estate man has one final strike against him. Most Appeals Court nominees have had some experience arguing cases in federal court. When DeConcini asked him whether he had federal court experience, Siegan replied, "Not to any significance." He had, it turned out, appeared in federal court when he was a law student 40 years ago.

By Hillel Schenker

NEW YORK

AMERICAN JEWS ARE UNEASY. TO DATE 35 Palestinians have been killed, about 300 wounded and 2,000 arrested, as the Israeli army tries to contain and discourage mass civil disobedience in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip (see *In These Times*, Jan. 13). Images on TV of Israeli soldiers kicking Palestinian demonstrators have been particularly disturbing. So have reports about a Palestinian teenager who was tied to the hood of an army jeep, apparently as a shield against rock throwing; about how Israeli soldiers beat nurses and doctors in a Gaza hospital who were trying to prevent them from taking wounded youths away for questioning; and about the recent accidental shooting by a frightened young soldier of a woman who was hanging her laundry. He was chasing a rock-throwing youth through the narrow alleys of a refugee camp.

The unease has been compounded by official U.S. criticism of Israeli actions. State Department spokeswoman Phyllis Oakley recently said that "order should be maintained without the use of lethal force," and even President Reagan said that although Israel "may not be concerned" about international criticism, "maybe the world is concerned." And when the U.S. voted in favor of what became a unanimous U.N. Security Council resolution urging Israel not to deport Palestinians from the occupied territories, it marked the first time in six years that the American U.N. delegation had been instructed to support a U.N. resolution condemning Israel.

Official Israeli justification for the use of lethal methods of riot control—"the army wasn't prepared for the wave of disturbances" and "the army doesn't have a large enough budget to set up a separate riot-control force"—are considered extremely inadequate by many American Jews. "Why do they use live ammunition? There are other ways of confronting rocks and firebombs," one American Jewish leader said. Another prominent leader said he was extremely disturbed by the intention to deport nine Palestinians, a move that violates the Geneva Convention and is opposed by human rights activists around the world.

In the earlier stages of the turmoil, when Israeli Defense Minister Yitzhak Rabin and Foreign Minister Shimon Peres were visiting the U.S., representatives of such mainstream organizations as the American Jewish Committee, the American Jewish Congress and the National Jewish Community Relations Advisory Committee had a private audience with the two leaders of the Israeli Labor Party. The Americans voiced their objections to techniques being used by the Israeli Defense Forces (IDF) to put down the rebellion. Rabin claimed that the IDF had no alternative if it wanted to maintain order in the occupied territories. Peres was more moderate in his response, saying that the only way out of the dilemma was to find a political solution.

But following official U.S. criticism of Israeli policy, a delegation from the Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations met with Deputy Secretary of State John Whitehead. While agreeing that Israel should use more non-lethal riot-control methods, conference chairman Morris Abram objected to the U.S. criticism, and said that the demonstrators were carrying



A Palestinian youth is beaten by Israeli soldiers during recent unrest on the Gaza Strip.

American Jews and Israeli policy: The voices of dissent grow louder

out "guerrilla warfare" designed not only "to overthrow the rule of the government of Israel in the territories," but also "the government of Israel in Israel."

The two major voices for organized American Jewry on TV have been Abram and Rabbi Alexander Schindler, president of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. While Abram has defended the official Israeli policy, Schindler has focused on the need to resolve the underlying problems by promoting the peace process via an international conference. (Foreign Minister Peres supports the international conference vehicle, while Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir strongly opposes it.)

Rabbi Schindler says that greater U.S. promotion of the peace process would be preferable to negative U.S. criticism of Israeli policy. Schindler also says that the only way to rule over a population of over a million Palestinians is by the force of a gun. "Is that the Zionist dream?" he asks. Another prominent spokesperson, Henry Siegman, executive director of the American Jewish Congress, says that "if the situation doesn't change, there is a severe danger that the territories will become a second Lebanon."

Shifting views: American Jews used to defend official Israeli policy and actions almost automatically. After 2,000 years of Jewish exile and suffering, most Jews here thought the Israeli government had the authority and knowledge to decide what was best for the state of Israel.

But the Lebanon war was a turning point. For the first time, significant numbers of American Jews questioned Israeli leadership on a major policy issue. And following the massacre of hundreds of Palestinians in the refugee camps—Sabra and Shatilla—carried out by the Lebanese Christian Phalan-

gists with the complicity of the Israeli army, pressure from American Jewish leaders helped convince then-Prime Minister Menachem Begin to abandon his original opposition to a commission of inquiry into the events.

The recent Pollard Affair, which involved the clumsy hiring of an American Jew who worked in naval intelligence in Washington to spy on behalf of Israel, and the inept handling of the case after he was captured, was greeted with dismay by many American Jews.

And now the reaction of many U.S. Jews to the Israeli army's lethal methods of riot control during the past month is reminiscent of their reaction during the most brutal stages of the Lebanon War.

Unease in Babylon: While a large percentage of American Jews still automatically defend Israeli actions, either out of an objection to "washing dirty laundry in public," or because they genuinely believe that Israel has no alternative, the fact is that unease is growing in Babylon.

A growing number of Jews here are demonstrating a readiness to oppose official Israeli government policy and support alternative approaches. The American Jewish Congress and the Reform movement have broken ranks with Prime Minister Shamir and expressed their support for an international peace conference. American supporters of the Tel Aviv-based International Center for Peace in the Mideast released a statement expressing concern over the cycle of violence on the West Bank and the Gaza Strip, saying that "the conflict cannot be resolved by force...only through a political settlement of the Palestinian problem."

The American Friends of the Israeli Peace Now movement, meanwhile, published an ad

in *The New York Times* declaring that "there is an alternative to rifles, rocks and firebombs." The group called on the Israeli government and the Palestinian leadership to renounce violence, to endorse an international peace conference and to "begin the arduous process of reconciling Israeli security needs with Palestinian self-determination." Americans for Progressive Israel, which supports the socialist opposition Mapam Party in Israel, published an ad in *The Jerusalem Post* and in various American Jewish publications that advocated a letter-writing campaign urging the Israeli government "to initiate peace negotiations, refrain from establishing new settlements, permit organized political activity, encourage economic development, and immediately stop the use of lethal force against demonstrators in the West Bank and Gaza."

In New York, New Jewish Agenda, the Jewish Peace Fellowship and the International Jewish Peace Union organized a protest vigil outside of the Israeli consulate calling for "an end to the violence in the West Bank and Gaza, the opening of negotiations with the Palestinians, and an Israel without occupation and discrimination."

There are American Jews, and Israelis, who still believe that only Israelis have a right to express opinions about Israeli policy. In Israel, these are usually defenders of the status-quo who don't want to see the boat rocked. But Abba Eban, an Israeli who is widely respected by American Jews, declared that "constructive criticism is healthy for Israeli policy-makers, just as it is of importance that extremist tendencies in the Arab world be criticized." Peres has said that the issue of peace is so important that it "should be debated by both Israelis and American Jews." Shamir, of course, disagrees.

In praise of public protest: Nat Hentoff wrote last month in *The Village Voice* that "Now is the time to seriously open a sustained debate...inside American Jewish organizations, synagogues, the Jewish press, the federations—everywhere there are Jews who greatly desire that Israel survive as a democratic Jewish state." Hentoff claims that Jews in America "can help the voices of survival in Israel by publicly protesting those government actions that are undermining the Jewish state."

The debate over Israel's future direction and policies is open and unhampered in Israel. It is all over the newspapers, on the TV screens, in the streets, in the private meetings, in the Knesset, and even within the reserve army units. That is part of the vitality of the Israeli democracy, which is being endangered by the ongoing undemocratic occupation of 1.4 million Palestinians in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip.

As Israel enters its 40th year, it is time for a new, more mature relationship between Israel and world Jewry, one based upon a free, constructive, and sometimes even painfully critical dialogue. With the debate in Israel, Israelis only benefit from the input and perspective of American Jews. And liberal and progressive U.S. Jews are beginning to have fewer inhibitions about expressing their views, as well as supporting those Israelis who articulate their vision of what Israel should be. □

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INSHORT

By Joel Bleifuss

Campaign tales

Political wags in California are speculating that Willie Brown, speaker of the State Assembly and as such one of California's most powerful Democratic politicians, has accepted the position of Chairman Jesse Jackson's presidential campaign with an eye toward delivering convention delegates to Mario Cuomo next summer in the event Jackson does not gain the nomination. There is also speculation that Brown would not mind moving on to a nice job in some future Cuomo administration. Brown has denied these reports in at least one press conference, but he is not a man known for consistent candor with the press. In Illinois last fall, before the death of Mayor Harold Washington, talk had it that Washington, who endorsed Jackson early, had plans to throw his support to Paul Simon in the event that Jackson did not have enough votes for the nomination. With Washington gone, Brown is in a stronger position to wheel and deal, should he choose to do so.

Rich get richer

Who received average raises of \$104,140 in 1986? The 38 corporate executives of the 19 companies that over the last three years were responsible for laying off 20,140 Massachusetts workers. According to the New England Equity Institute in Boston, in 1986 (the last year for which data is available) the raises brought the average yearly salary of these 38 executives to \$843,263—\$1,252,579 if long-term compensation is taken into account. Tom Gallagher, director of the public policy institute, says that these figures are "part of a growing national trend toward increased economic security at the top and increased economic insecurity at the bottom."

Golden profits

"Right now, you can feel the excitement in the air," says Dr. Thomas Prose. "We're on the verge of something very simple, very cheap, yet very, very big." He is talking about the potential profits to be squeezed from urine collected in men's porta-potties. Prose sits on the board of Enzymes of America (EOA), a Michigan company that harvests protein from outhouse urinals. According to *Science for the People*, EOA separates 10 of the 40,000 different proteins found in male urine and sells them to drug companies. EOA is a horizontally diversified concern. The company collects its urine from men attending outdoor concerts, festivals and sports events. This is done through EOA's subsidiary, Porta-John, the largest portable-toilet company in the world. To meet the demands of this growth industry, Porta-John is set to expand its Washington, D.C. operations in an effort to cash in on the flow from political demonstrations and the capital's Fourth of July celebration.

Remember the Maccabees

On December 30 in downtown Berkeley, the New Jewish Agenda, International Jewish Peace Union and people from the Kehilla Community Synagogue, including Rabbi Burt Jacobson, sponsored a "Jewish Demonstration/Vigil Against the Killings of Palestinian Protesters by Israeli Authorities." Joshua Nessen of the American Committee on Africa reports that the 50 people taking part in the candlelight vigil "made it clear that there is a long-standing Jewish heritage that stands in direct opposition to the U.S.-backed repression of the Israeli state." As a flyer distributed by the demonstrators put it: "Last week, on Chanuka, we celebrated the victory of the Maccabees over Hellenistic occupation. The lesson this has always taught us, and which we teach to our children, is that steadfast adherence to one's freedom and people will have the power to overcome even superior arms. In the face of this lesson, we recognize that the demand of the Palestinians for their national self-determination will not be suppressed by increasingly repressive measures to pacify the population."

The real criminal walked

The three crew members of the Navy munitions train that on September 1, 1987 ran over Brian Willson are suing their victim. They accuse Willson of consciously disregarding their rights and feelings by allowing the train to hit him. The men want compensation for the humiliation, embarrassment, mental anguish, emotional and physical distress and loss of earnings that they suf-



Karen Parker-Leans

Interior Department proposes mining Hawaii's seafloor

The Department of Interior plans to open for underwater mining purposes 6.65 million acres of seafloor surrounding the Hawaiian and Johnston Islands, a U.S. territory 375 miles southwest of Hawaii. And Hawaiian ecologists fear this ocean mining would wreak environmental havoc.

The aim of this federal proposal is to develop a domestic source of cobalt, a military strategic mineral used in the manufacture of jet engines, tools and dies, magnets and stainless steel. Currently the U.S. consumes one-third of the world production of cobalt. All of this cobalt comes from foreign sources including Zambia and Zaire.

The Department of the Interior believes the existing supply of cobalt will be depleted by the first half of the 21st century. It fears that if the U.S. does not develop domestic cobalt sources the nation will face serious cobalt shortages. The mining would also produce nickel, manganese and possibly platinum.

The mining process would use an ocean dredger to remove cobalt rich crust from the seafloor at depths of between 2,600 and 7,900 feet. This raw material would then be pumped to a ship, the minerals separated out, and the remaining sediment dumped back into the ocean.

The Department of the Interior and state of Hawaii have jointly issued a Draft Environmental Impact

Study (DEIS) that outlines the project's goals and potential impact on the marine ecosystem. The state of Hawaii supports the project as the "latest step toward a marine minerals industry" that would provide employment, diversify the economy and increase the islands' level of technology.

But its critics attack the DEIS as woefully incomplete and wholly inaccurate. Denver Leaman, ocean mining coordinator for Greenpeace Hawaii, says that the DEIS is filled with "wishful thinking." His group wants the project postponed for at least five years.

Greenpeace also wants a heavily-fished seafloor tract adjacent to the big island of Hawaii removed from consideration for the project. Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources and the National Marine Fisheries Service have also called for the area's removal from the proposal.

After analyzing the government's report, marine biologist and environmental activist Debby Dalton concluded: "There are many environmental concerns which the DEIS does not satisfactorily answer, many conclusions which seem to contradict available data, and far too many conclusions drawn on little or no known data." The deep-sea mining process involves dumping sediment at the rate of seven tons a minute. Dalton believes this sediment fallout would endanger coral (a staple of the Hawaiian economy) along with many species of fish and marine larvae. The miles-long sediment plume would cut water visibility in half, affecting the fishes' ability to feed. The DEIS states that the min-

ing would at best reduce the number of skipjack and yellowfin tuna by 46,000 and 15,000 a year respectively, cutting into Hawaii's profitable long-line fishing industry. And the report acknowledges that the impact on the fish population could be much worse.

As part of the proposal an on-land cobalt refinery would be built on one of three sites: Ewa, Oahu; Kawaihae; and Puna, on the big island. According to Leaman, "People are worried that [the cobalt smelter] would open the door for heavy industry. Once you put the geothermal lines from the generation site to the industrial area...then you now have electricity available, you've got the zoning changed and that would tend to attract more heavy industry."

Leaman wants instead to diversify the area's agriculture economy which would maintain the region's tropical identity and thereby preserve the tourist trade.

Legal questions surround the proposal as well. The outer Continental Shelf Lands Act authorizes the secretary of the interior to administer mineral exploration and development on the Outer Continental Shelf. It does not specify U.S. territories like the Johnston islands as open to development, only states and state coastal waters. "I see it as a move by the administration to get a precedent for ocean mining and offshore leasing in the United States inside the Exclusive Economic Zones," says Leaman. "The Department of the Interior is claiming authority under a very gray area."

The public comment period for the proposal will close February 8. A final environmental impact study

will then be sent to Secretary of the Interior Donald Hodel for his consideration. According to the former federal co-chairman of the project,

Robert G. Paul, the actual mining would follow exploration and development and would not take place until the next century. Despite the

criticism, both Leaman and Paul expect the project to be approved by the end of this year, possibly with some modification. —Marc Shaffer

Toys for Rambo's boys

Paramilitary is in—and America's manufacturers of toy guns and non-powder firearms (like BB guns) know it. Facsimiles of hunting rifles and Old West six-shooters have been supplanted in the toy market by replicas of machine guns and large-caliber handguns. And although a big hit with young consumers, "look-alikes" are increasingly being recognized as a public-safety hazard.

Similar in weight and scale to real guns, the new paramilitary non-powder firearms are hard to distinguish from their more deadly counterparts. The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) estimates that each year 3–3.5 million non-powder firearms are sold in the U.S.—mostly to children under 15.

Daisy Manufacturing leads this paramilitary parade with its non-powder Softair guns. These working replicas fire plastic pellets at low velocities. The ad copy for an Uzi replica proclaims, "So accurate in detail, you'll swear it's the real thing!" The pitch for another Daisy replica reads "Made famous in the motion picture *Rambo: First Blood, Part II*...has the look and feel of the real thing."

Although often viewed as toys, any non-powder firearm is hazardous—no matter what it looks like. In 1980 and 1981, 45,557 children and young adults were injured by non-powder firearms, while only 39,698

injuries stemmed from powder guns such as handguns, rifles and shotguns. Yet, although the CPSC has the power to ban or order modifications to hazardous products, in this case it refuses to take action. The reason is depressingly familiar. Admits one CPSC staff member, "As I see it, airguns are clearly a stepping stone to the real thing. If we suggest that we're going to remove a part of the market, we're going to have every NRA [National Rifle Association] member writing us a letter."

Far more common than non-powder firearms are plastic-molded toy guns. In addition to M-16s, AK-47s, Uzis and KG-9 machine pistols, Daisy—self-proclaimed leader in the field—offers replicas of silenced Ingram MAC-10 machine pistols (favored by the cocaine cowboys of southern Florida), .30-caliber bolt-action machine guns, and electronic bazookas.

According to the International Association of Chiefs of Police, what makes look-alikes so appealing—that they look *just like* real paramilitary guns—is what makes them uniquely hazardous. As the use of real paramilitary weapons in crime and gang activity has increased, police are far more likely to assume that look-alikes in innocent hands are in fact real firearms—a terrifying situation that is becoming increasingly common.

In addition, gun-control advocates note that the use of a paramilitary airgun can only increase the chance that the owner will eventually upgrade to the real thing. The federal

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms reports that more than 500,000 semi-automatic paramilitary weapons are in civilian hands. The vast majority of these were purchased this decade.

As the result of the increasing number of incidents involving look-alikes, city and state governments have begun to restrict their availability and use. Since September Burbank, Santa Monica, and Los Angeles, Calif. have banned the sale of look-alike toy guns. Washington, D.C., Boston, and Atlanta are considering similar measures. As of January, in California it is now a misdemeanor to brandish a look-alike in a threatening manner and a bill to restrict production and distribution was recently introduced in the state legislature. On the federal level, Rep. Mel Levine (D-CA) has introduced a bill requiring that look-alikes be marked in such a way as to make them readily identifiable. A similar bill has been introduced in the Senate by Sen. Robert Dole (R-KA). Reacting to civic and police concerns, last September Daisy began marking each of its look-alike toys with an "international orange" stripe. And in December Toys-R-Us, the nation's largest toy retailer, announced that it will no longer sell realistic-looking toy guns.

Whether special markings and regional sales bans will have any real impact remains to be seen. But until an effective solution is reached, both police and public will continue to be at risk.

—Josh Sugarman

Two mysterious deaths in Honduras

Tegucigalpa, Honduras—Two mysterious deaths this month have been attributed to the Honduran army by the chief human rights group here, substantiating charges of a deteriorating human rights situation.

On January 4 Honduran army soldiers were spotted carrying a body into a local hospital. The dead man was Joselito Aguilera Cordova, a young man who had been active in student politics before being forcibly recruited into the Honduran Special Forces. Although the army originally claimed Aguilera had died of a heart attack, a photo released later indicated that he had been severely beaten.

According to the president of the Honduran Committee in Defense of Human Rights, Ramon Custodio, Aguilera feared that he might be subject to reprisals or punishment from the army. In mid-December Aguilera reportedly deserted from the army. Custodio said at a press conference that Aguilera had told the rights group last November that military intelligence agents had held him for questioning about a trip he took to Nicaragua.

Aguilera's sister said after the killing that the army warned her not to talk about the condition of her brother's body, which she says was swollen from beatings.

The morning after Aguilera's corpse was discovered, a military officer was machine-gunned down at a bus stop in Tegucigalpa. The officer, Jose Isais Vilorio Barahona, was due to testify to the Inter-American Court on Human Rights on January 18 about Battalion 316, a military intelligence group allegedly responsible for Honduran disappearances.*

His assailants reportedly threw a banner over his body bearing the emblem of the leftist Popular Liberation Movement, known as the *Cinchoneros*. Later that day a letter claiming the slaying on behalf of the *Cinchoneros* was delivered to a Tegucigalpa newspaper.

But Custodio called into doubt the authorship of the crime. He said the Honduran left had the most interest in the testimony of Vilorio, whom a defector from Battalion 316 had described as the unit's personnel officer.

Custodio gave "more responsibility for the plot to the Honduran Minister of Foreign Relations Carlos

Lopez Contreras, and Procurator (equivalent to the U.S. attorney general) Ruben Dario Zepeda, who has dedicated himself to spreading the rumor of a supposed leftist conspiracy in Honduras."

"Who are those who gain the most by the silence of the witness?" asked Custodio. "The accused: the Honduran state and armed forces."

According to the rights group's latest report, extrajudicial executions in Honduras rose from 119 in 1986 to 263 in 1987. There were 22 "forced or involuntary disappearances" in 1987, while none were reported in 1986, the report said.

Custodio charged that last October, the Honduran government had prevented Vilorio and two other officers implicated in disappearances from testifying before the Inter-American Court of Human Rights based in San Juan, Costa Rica.

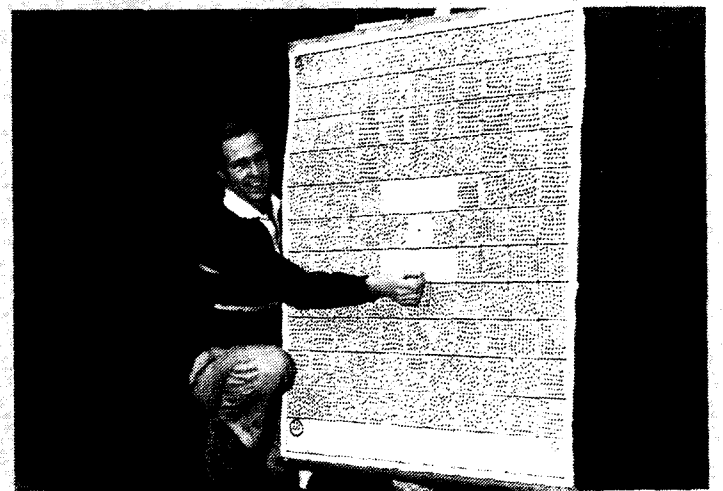
But a military spokesman, Col. Roberto Suarez, resounded that the court had not followed the proper procedure in requesting their appearance. Suarez rejected Custodio's charges that the military was responsible for the killing, saying "Custodio lied for his friends of the ultra-left."

—Peter Shinkle and Dennis Bernstein

fered after cutting off Willson's legs with their train. Lost in all this fuss is the U.S. Navy. Last November the House Armed Services Subcommittee on Investigations studied the accident. At that time the U.S. Navy provided the committee members with a file on its own internal investigation. But according to Kathy Bodovitz of the *San Francisco Chronicle*, missing from this report were the recommendations of Capt. Stanley Pryzby, the Navy's official investigator. He had recommended removing the Concord Naval Base commander from his post, suspending from one to four months the security manager who ordered the train out of the base with the comment "You might as well let them go ahead. We're going to have a confrontation sooner or later," and suspending for one month the train's conductor and engineer who saw the protesters on the tracks but made no attempt to stop. Pryzby harshly criticized the train's three crew members for clearly exceeding the speed limit of five miles per hour. He estimates that when they hit Willson the train was going between 12 and 16 miles per hour. Rep. George Miller (D-CA) is concerned about what the accident portends for our nation's military capability. "They couldn't deal with one man, with notice, sitting on the railroad tracks in a suburban community. It raises fundamental concerns about command and control."

Can it happen?

"Is nuclear war between the U.S. and USSR a serious possibility in the near future?" The Center for War, Peace, and the News Media in New York put this question to 23 reporters who cover the national security beat for major news organs. John J. Fialka, a *Wall Street Journal* staff reporter in London, votes aye. "Yes," he says, "It is a serious possibility in the near future." As far as Norman Black, the Associated Press's Pentagon correspondent, is concerned, it is impossible. "There is nothing to suggest it from a military standpoint." Michael Mecham, congressional editor of *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (a trade publication of the military-industrial complex), comes down from the ozone with a historical perspective. "I do not worry about nuclear war," he says. "I think it is a narcissism in our generation. Every generation had their version of nuclear war. Rome destroyed Carthage totally. The Greeks eliminated the Trojans. What happened before is just as bad as what would happen to us." And Rick Inderfurth, ABC news' national security correspondent, gives one of the more thoughtful answers. "With 50,000 nuclear weapons in the world today tied into computers, there is always the potential that something could go wrong," says Inderfurth. "I do not feel that the U.S. or the USSR has any intension of striking the other, but the possibility exists that others could start a conflict and draw the U.S. and the USSR into it."



Only 5,820 to go

If the INF Treaty is fully followed by the U.S. and the USSR, the two countries would have reduced their nuclear megatonnage by 3 percent in three years. To celebrate this coming event, peace activists in Burlington, Vt, got together last month to help Jim Geier block out 180 dots on his "nuclear dot chart." The chart now contains only 5,820 dots. These dots represent the 17,460 megatons of nuclear fire power in the Superpowers' arsenals, or in more understandable terms the equivalent to the explosive power of 5,820 World War IIs. The INF treaty, as Jesse Jackson pointed out, represents "one small step for mankind, one giant leap for Ronald Reagan."



By David Moberg

WEST OKOBOJI, IOWA

THE THIN LAYER OF CRYSTALLINE SNOW on the gently rolling fields of turned sod and corn stubble glistened brightly in the frozen morning light. At 23 degrees below zero, it was remarkable that at 8 a.m. anyone was up and about in the small towns of the richly endowed but poorly remunerated farms of northwestern Iowa, unless a job of tending frigid cattle demanded it. But 50 people were waiting in a local hotel one early January morning for breakfast with presidential candidate Jesse Jackson.

This was hardly stereotypical Jackson country. During a busy day of campaigning there wasn't a black face in any local audience. Instead the meeting halls were packed with a small-town panoply of farmers and factory workers, waitresses and professionals, who responded to Jackson and his message with apparent respect and admiration, even if they weren't sure they were going to vote for him.

Indeed, even though Jackson may get a respectable but small vote in the February Iowa caucuses, he has struck a chord among far more Iowans. Recent polls show him getting under 10 percent of the caucus vote for fifth place but having a 35 percent favorable rating, just behind top-ranked Sen. Paul Simon.

That is partly because Jackson continues, as he did four years ago, to sound a strong moral appeal in his politics, a social gospel of peace, family and community stability, and economic justice. But it is also because Jackson has changed. His message is now more inclusive and focused more on economic issues, especially the behavior of big corporations and the direction of public and private investment. Despite his continued use of the civil rights movement as

6 IN THESE TIMES JAN. 20-26, 1988

Jackson: "I'm already the conscience of the party. I intend to be the candidate of the party."

On the road with Jackson in Iowa: addressing the primary issues

the historical framework for his candidacy, he has downplayed race issues and the "racial battleground" in favor of an economic "common ground."

Alternative visions: Jackson differs from other Democratic aspirants on several issues—such as his insistence on justice for Palestinians as well as security for Israel—but the biggest difference is not statements of policy. Rather it is Jackson's knack for getting people to think about issues in a new

way, for changing the way people view the political landscape. He is easily mocked for his penchant for rhymes, but these alliterations are rhetorical elements of a strategy to get people to ask different questions and thus see different answers.

CAMPAIGN 88

Many of Jackson's specific proposals are sketchy or unoriginal. But in an important sense he offers more "new ideas" than Gary Hart, who has fewer new ideas than his frequent talk about them would suggest and has rarely succeeded in formulating them in a way the average voter can grasp. Jackson appeals to many widely held, supposedly "conservative" values (indeed a November CBS/*New York Times* poll showed him na-

tionally doing virtually as well as any of his rivals among conservative white Democrats). But Jackson shows how those values lead to policies that traditionally would be considered "left" and yet simply sound like common sense.

"Our challenge as we gather today is to focus on who is hardest hit by this weather," Jackson began at the West Okoboji gathering. It was a typical preacherly move to make a parable out of everyday experience. It also reflects Jackson's continuing focus on the most disadvantaged, a strategy that emphasizes moral empathy but downplays appeals to self-interest of those who are not down and out. "Many of our friends are having trouble with jumping their cars or are calling in late for work. What is not being discussed is the plight of the abandoned, the victims of Reaganomics."

The Christmas season just celebrated was not about giving and getting gifts, he continued. "It was about a homeless couple that was rejected by an innkeeper—a bureaucrat—and abandoned by the government—Herod. In the face of rejection and abandonment, wise men changed their policies and took their gifts to the homeless." Now the abandoned include farmers, truck drivers victimized by deregulation, small-town bankers, young people without scholarships, old people without health care, he said.

Budget reversal: The budget crisis didn't result from these people being unproductive or getting too much from government, Jackson told them, but because Reagan

"doubled the military budget and radically cut taxes."

But military spending could be cut. "We are militarily strong," he said, in another attempt to shift the way his audience looks at issues, "but our policy is weak." Spending more for arms, he would repeat throughout the day, creates a "false security," but relying on Mideast oil or combatting aspirations of the Third World poor weakens the U.S.

Likewise, with the tax cuts for corporations and the wealthy, "the premise was they would reinvest," he said. "Instead they closed plants without notice." The budget deficits and private corporate decisions are linked. "We must discuss Cargill [the giant grain trading company expanding into agribusiness] and Iowa Beef [a notoriously anti-union meatpacker with a factory in the area], not just budgets," Jackson insisted. "We must discuss General Electric and General Motors, beneficiaries of Reagan's largesse who are closing factories and taking our jobs to repressive labor markets abroad."

Instead of spending \$1 million a day in a risky venture in the Persian Gulf, he suggested, the U.S. could turn to West Virginia coal, alcohol from corn, solar energy and a Pan-American Energy Security Alliance with Mexico, Venezuela, Colombia and other hemispheric oil producers. "Our future is not feeding 150,000 contras," Jackson said. "Our future is in exporting grain, tractors, rail, infrastructure and medicine to 400 million people in Latin America" who could be allies and customers.

Throughout the day he wove together themes of moral virtue, personal and social salvation, political empowerment and economic restructuring. At Estherville High School, where 250 students and residents packed the auditorium, Jackson briefly recounted the civil rights movement achievements, then gave his standard anti-drug rap.

He asked students to stand if they knew someone who had died from drugs (one stood), gone to jail as a result of drugs (a handful) or had used drugs (nearly all the students). And before a lunch crowd of adults at the Town & Country Supper Club, a roadside restaurant near tiny Emmetsburg, he spent much of his time again attacking drug use.

Jackson's attention to the drug theme seems incongruous, although he often blames drug use on the despair of those who have little hope. He may be capitalizing on drug hysteria (some surveys suggest the problems may be declining), but his measures are relatively benign if unoriginal: interdiction of supplies, education and rehabilitation.

"It is the one threat to every American household with children that crosses all lines, racial, regional, that's real in everybody's experience," he said later when questioned about his emphasis. "In Iowa, in New York, in California, in Chicago, across Republican, Democratic, black, white lines, it is real...A lot of people are saying, 'We may not like this [position Jackson takes], but we like [what he's saying about drugs]. The confidence I've built up with youth is significant to parents. I may be one of the few people who has the attention and confidence of their children.'" Indeed a November CBS/*New York Times* poll showed Jackson winning support from half of the Democratic primary voters under 30, suggesting he has the political mirror-image appeal of a Reagan.

The Jackson message: But his distinct political message comes from his reformulations of issues, scattered throughout speeches during the day. "Nothing is wrong with the American worker," he said of the crises of trade and unemployment; "something is wrong with the formula."

Deregulation in airline and trucking, he said, has simply turned into "re-regulation by concentrations of wealth." (Jackson has ardently defended the Teamsters against a government trusteeship, scoffing at the idea of Attorney General Edwin Meese taking over the union, thus winning much local-level Teamster support.)

"Poor people do not need motivation," he argued. "They need to get paid for the work they do" (especially since most poor are white and work, not black and unemployed).

When addressing an enthusiastic audience of 150 packinghouse workers in Cherokee on the trade deficit, he noted that General Motors opened new plants in South Korea shortly after announcing shutdown of 11 plants in the U.S. "South Korea did not take jobs from us," he said. "General Motors took them to South Korea."

Asked about family planning, he said he supports both family planning and family stability. Stable family farms and jobs are the best family props, and "Head Start and day care are cheaper than welfare and jail care." On abortion, "women should have freedom of choice but should make the moral choice."

"My view of things has expanded since 1984, when we kicked around the novel idea of protesting a locked-out Democratic Party process," he said on the road between stops. Campaigning in Iowa then was ruled out, but this time around he was invited and came. The "comfort level" of white voters with him has increased, he said, but it seems his own comfort level with different white constituencies has also grown. "This time people here see the relationship between farms and arms, they see the relationship between

workers fighting for fair wages and return of their jobs and farmers fighting for fair prices and return of their land as being the same cause."

But Jackson's message has expanded as well, and he is at his best in situations like this, where he must broaden his base. "No question," Jackson said. "Every time another constituency group joins the thrust you make room for that group and define its interest as part of the whole. If you speak to family farmers, you also speak of day care centers and Head Start, you speak of the interest of senior citizens, you speak of victims of Gramm-Rudman-Hollings-Simon-Gephardt-Gore legislation."

Fishing for barracudas: At an evening meeting, Jackson gave his own parable of the fishes. "You have a fishing pond and see all your little fish are eaten up," he said. "Don't ask for a government grant to study if little fish can swim. Look for the barracudas. Let us debate the barracudas, the merger maniacs, the monopolists." The other candidates shy from such talk, although Bruce Babbitt has been lending strong support to a statewide campaign against Iowa Beef Processors.

"They bring their foot up to the door of corporate power machinery and then step away," Jackson said of his rivals. "I do not want to ascribe a motive, but when it comes to the cutting edge, they will not step across the line. They know the merger maniacs wreck the American worker. Reagan's extreme pro-business, anti-labor posture has moved government from being the balancing wheel between business and labor."

Jackson said he would enforce anti-trust

as well as pregnancy leave, comprehensive medical care, job retraining and an income floor, he said. Yet even for them Jackson couches his appeal in terms of fear of adversity.

"Someone asked me," he said, "How would you get the yuppies involved?" You go to Wall Street while they're packing their bags and say, 'Now that the ride is over, let's build a sound economy based on working industry and not paper wealth. Welcome back to the real world.'"

Facing recession: If a Democrat wins, he is likely to come into office facing an economy in deep recession with huge balance of payment deficits and an unstable international currency situation. Like the rest, Jackson does not seem to know what to do. He would convene congressional leaders, financial leaders, union leaders to come up with collective wisdom, but this is hardly a promising prospect. And he would help establish a tripartite board of labor, business and government—under private control—to invest a percentage of pension funds with government insurance and guaranteed minimum return on such infrastructure projects as transportation and schools.

But Jackson rejects the idea of treating capital spending—such as long-term investments in infrastructure—in a budget separate from annual expenses. He argues for getting out of the budget deficit as we came in, reversing the military spending spree and tax cuts for the wealthy. He would cut the military budget by 10 percent (and reduce troops in Europe by one-third) to save \$30 billion a year, make corporations pay the 1980 level of taxes (\$25 billion) and make

"How would you get yuppies involved? You go to Wall Street while they're packing their bags and say, 'Now that the ride is over let's build a sound economy based on working industry, not paper wealth.'"

legislation and worker collective bargaining rights as president, but he talks of moving "corporations more by incentives, because capital follows incentives, not conscience. The incentives should shift from divestment from America to reinvestment in America. It should shift from the phenomenon of merging corporations and purging workers, leveraged buyouts and submerging the economy, to reinvesting in America, retraining Americans, reindustrialize our nation, research for our development, and conversion...from building war machinery to building infrastructure products." Jackson doesn't make clear what the incentives would be, but using tax incentives would re-open an unproductive and now largely discredited strategy.

Four years ago Jackson had a hard time making room for white male workers in his Rainbow Coalition, even if it included among others blacks, Hispanics, women, the handicapped, gays. Yet his work with steelworkers and meatpackers as well as farmers in the Midwest has led him to incorporate such workers in a more class-conscious coalition. But does he have a message for hypothetical "new collar workers," a suburban couple in their '30s, the husband a Xerox machine repairman, the wife a secretary?

"They have jobs without security," Jackson responded. "They are expendable, one layoff and one cold away from poverty." Even that family needs a day care center for their children so the wife can keep working

people earning \$100,000 or above stay in the 38 percent income tax bracket (\$25 billion). "That's not raise taxes and spend," Jackson insisted. "That's fair taxes and invest, which is another spin on the argument."

Jackson would also expand U.S. markets by writing off most of the Latin American private bank debt as uncollectable. The banks "failed in good judgment when they overextended themselves," he said. "Their purpose was not developmental. It was a high-risk venture. I would not want to hasten their failure..., but we cannot let the private ventures of those banks interfere with the long-term national interest of our country."

Jackson seems inclined to wield U.S. influence internationally and even to talk of geopolitical interests in rivalry with the Soviet Union. But mainly he insists on a consistent policy of respect for international law, support for self-determination and human rights and economic development. If it's wrong for Ayatollah Khomeini to mine the Persian Gulf, then it's wrong for the U.S. to mine Nicaraguan harbors.

Regarding the Mideast, Jackson gives his typical twist by arguing for Palestinian rights on the basis of Israeli self-interest. "Israeli security is inextricably bound to Palestinian justice," Jackson said. "We did a marvelous thing by helping to found and then sustain Israel. We brought them a great measure of security by bringing them to Camp David and getting Egypt and Israel on a course of

mutual recognition. We must now get Israel and the Palestinians on a mutual recognition course and away from a mutual destruction course. Unless we do that Israel faces an insurmountable burden of occupation, and occupation is too great a burden to bear....We must show a commitment to Israel's security. We must also assure the Palestinians of our commitment to them, recognition as a state, to assure security for Israel, justice for the Palestinians and peace for both."

Can he win? Despite the improved "comfort levels" and sympathy with the message, many voters simply think Jackson can't win, that the country isn't ready for a black president or that he doesn't have the necessary experience. In his last meeting of the day in the basement of the half-remodeled Tangny Hotel in Spencer, Jackson tried to move his audience from "Jesse, but" to "Jesse, therefore." He argued that his candidacy could expand the Democratic Party as reflected in the anti-Bork coalition. He cited his experience in civil rights, mediation, dealing with foreign leaders, motivating youth, and standing on the front lines with displaced workers, foreclosed farmers, peace marchers and advocates for victims of AIDS.

Jackson's lack of governmental experience certainly hurts his cause, especially since polls seem to show voters looking for an experienced Washington leader this year, not an outsider. Of course, Eugene Debs was an inspirational presidential candidate who never held governmental office, and Dwight Eisenhower commanded an army but had no legislative or governmental executive experience. With Jackson there may be deeper worries that he has not shown ability to organize a movement and party as Debs did or administer an organization, even if his understanding of political rhetoric and values and his grasp of fundamental issues surpasses that of most officeholders.

Jackson will be pleased if he can get more than 10 percent of Iowans to make that leap, as a first step in making the argument that he is a contender for white votes. Many Iowans who support him seem to have been as much won over by a sense of his character as by his political message.

Barb Berkenpas, an independent, and her farmer-husband, Carl, a lifelong Republican, are Jackson supporters. "He was talking in terms of values, what it takes to make the country great," she said of the speeches that won her over. "I talked with Carl about what we wanted in the next president—honesty, integrity, courage of conviction. Jesse Jackson has shown that through all his life and leadership."

But even those impressed with him hesitate. What would be the reaction if Jackson were white? "Pretty much overwhelming," said construction worker Paul Moffitt, 45, after the Estherville rally. "He would be a great president. But it's hard for people to accept a black as president." But Jackson is convinced people are "coming to grips with [the race question] in the most rational process conceivable, dealing with it step by step."

And what remains at the end? "For people to garner up their courage and vote conscience and conviction," Jackson answered.

Isn't that George McGovern's old message? "It's a little different," he said, with the customary immodesty that irks many, but may be no different from anyone who runs for president. "I'm already the conscience of the party. I intend to be the candidate of the party." □

By Salim Muwakkil

FOR MANY AFRICAN-AMERICANS THE OCTOBER 19 stock market crash provided a moment or two of deep satisfaction; the chickens finally had come home to roost on the mean-spirited economic policies of the Reagan administration.

The gloating was short-lived, however. For as economists began assessing the potentially deleterious effects of the market collapse, blacks once again realized their special vulnerability to the vagaries of the U.S.

POLITICS

economy. They also realized how little their condition had changed since "Black Tuesday" of 1929.

The continued use of the word "black" as a negative adjective is a subtle reminder of the problem this country has in coming to terms with its black population. A less subtle indication is the increase in racist violence against blacks. The year 1987 began with black protests against the Howard Beach (N.Y.) killing of Michael Griffith and racially motivated violence in Forsyth County, Ga., and it ended with a massive New York City protest against what black leaders contend is a "national epidemic" of racism.

On December 21, a group of the city's black leaders staged a coordinated rush-hour protest in Manhattan and Brooklyn that severely disrupted travel for commuters and holiday shoppers. The demonstrators cited an array of grievances, including the Howard Beach incident as well as several additional episodes of racially motivated attacks, the police killings of several blacks and Hispanics, and the recent gang rape of a 15-year-old girl allegedly by several white men who scrawled "KKK" and "nigger" on her bruised body. Nearly 70 demonstrators were arrested.

No justice, no peace: "Those white rapists were sending a message to the black community," said Rev. Benjamin Chavis Jr., executive director of the United Church of Christ's Commission for Racial Justice and one of the protest leaders. "That message is that racism is on the rise in America, and that it is open season on black people where they have a free hand with black women and children." Chavis added that since no one in this nation's leadership is doing anything about it, "African-Americans have a tremendous challenge to get involved and make sure that these incidents will never happen again."

Other leaders of the demonstration compared the racist violence in the U.S. with that in South Africa, and vowed to increase the level of protests until officials took concrete steps to address the problem. "If we can't get justice, there will be no peace," said Jitu Weusi, a long-time Brooklyn community leader. "And there are thousands of young people who feel exactly like I do. We're very serious about this and we're in it for the long haul."

Other fronts: The younger black leadership in the New York metropolitan area has chosen militant protests as the most effective way to challenge the status quo. But other black leaders are using less disruptive methods to make the same point.

John Jacob, president of the National Urban League, said increased political activity remains a key strategy. It was the large turnout of black voters in the mid-term elections of 1986, Jacob argued, that forced Con-

Black movement, 1988: new energy, old battles



gress to reject the Supreme Court nomination of Judge Robert H. Bork. "The emergence of the anti-Bork coalition may be one of the most important lasting effects of 1987's events," he said. "The task of that coalition," he added, "goes beyond that of de-

Some younger blacks are using more militant protest tactics to give a sense of urgency to what they see as a "national epidemic" of racism. Blacks are also showing power at the polls.

feating one Supreme Court nominee, to the job of reconstructing the nation to become stronger economically and morally."

In past years Jacob's call for social reconstruction has fallen on deaf ears. But with the discrediting of Reaganomics and the growing visibility of a new corps of left-leaning scholars urging increased investment in human capital, the Urban League leader's

prescriptions may get a fair hearing.

Debunking Murray: Charles Murray's 1984 book *Losing Ground* provided philosophical justification for the cruel economic policies of the Reagan years. Murray blamed the liberal social programs and policies of the '60s for the explosive growth of the black underclass. He argued that those Great Society programs actually encouraged the poor to remain in poverty and engage in sociopathic behavior by supplying them with incentives to do so.

"Probably no work has done more to promote the view that federal programs are harmful to the poor," said William Julius Wilson about Murray's book. Wilson is a professor of sociology at the University of Chicago, and author of *The Truly Disadvantaged: the Inner City, the Underclass and Public Policy*, a book that thoroughly debunks Murray's thesis. Wilson argued that overall economic trends, not increases in social welfare programs, are responsible for the increasing ranks of the urban poor. His research clearly demonstrated that it is the doubling of unemployment rates and other large-scale economic shifts that have devastated the inner city.

Wilson's argument is so compelling that

Murray's *Losing Ground* now seems like a shallow, ideologically loaded attempt to justify what Marxist scholar Manning Marable has termed "the Hobbesian social policies of the Reagan administration." Wilson has provided a sound theoretical foundation for the renewed program of economic reform called for by Jacob.

Jackson's role: The presidential campaign of Jesse Jackson provides another opportunity to address the structural economic changes that have so imperiled the well-being of African-Americans. With Jackson in the national limelight, issues of objective importance to blacks can no longer receive back-burner treatment. Yet some black organizers are expressing discontent with Jackson's energetic overtures to other constituencies. "We shouldn't be talking rainbow coalitions until we can form effective coalitions among ourselves," said Chicago attorney Thomas N. Todd, a co-founder of Operation PUSH. Todd said he's "a bit uncomfortable" with Jackson's lack of emphasis on race as an organizing principle.

But, by and large, Jackson's black support remains high and most strategists view his campaign as a plus. "Although there is no intrinsic reason to expect constant or major successes from Jackson's ritual-rebellion politics," wrote Martin Kilson in the spring 1987 issue of *Dissent*, "Jackson's effort does contribute fundamentally to broadening the pluralistic politics of American society. In this respect, his politics can be seen as an extension of the civil rights movement's earlier expansion of pluralism in American society."

Kilson, a professor of government at Harvard University, is a former Jackson critic, and his conversion represents a minor coup for the presidential candidate. Jackson's support now spans the ideological spectrum of black leadership; he's gained backing from traditional black clergy, mainstream black politicians, major black nationalists like Ron Karenga, Marxist intellectuals like Marable and social democrats like Kilson.

What's more, the National Rainbow Coalition spawned by Jackson's 1984 presidential run has, in some areas of the country, developed into a grass-roots operation ready to take up the cause of black empowerment as well as social justice issues.

This grass-roots movement could hold the key to progress. As time elapses to allow the consideration of differing policy approaches outlined by Wilson's book, one-third of the African-American population remains stuck beneath the poverty line. And, according to figures compiled by the Washington, D.C.-based Children's Defense Fund, nearly one-half of all black children are born into poverty.

These figures bode ill for the future of black America and require immediate attention. Because of the Reaganomic retreat from the battle for social and economic justice, most black organizations have assumed more responsibility for ameliorating the severe problems with which their communities are confronted. Some groups, convinced that the larger society will never devote the resources necessary to stem the increasing deterioration of the inner-city, are developing indigenous solutions.

The bold, young leadership leading the protests in New York City is expressing the sense of urgency these problems demand; if that energy can be harnessed, creatively directed, and generated elsewhere, it may force this society to take the drastic action needed.

By Doug Smith

WINNIPEG

IN THE PAST WHENEVER CANADIAN PRIME MINISTER Brian Mulroney and American President Ronald Reagan have done anything together, they've done it up royally. The most memorable of their get-togethers was the so-called 1985 Shamrock Summit in Quebec City. There the two men harmonized a version of "When Irish Eyes are Smiling" in a lavish production resembling a TV variety show.

So one would have expected them to lay it on thick for the January 2 signing of an agreement that would remove all trade barriers between their two countries. Instead they were not even in the same country, let alone the same room. There was no need, said the Canadian prime minister's aides, since the ceremony was largely symbolic. Those Canadians who tuned in for the late night news caught some pretty interesting symbols.

Mulroney, attired as befits one of the 10-best-dressed politicians in the world (an honor accorded him only days earlier) sat in his office telling reporters what an important day it was for Canada—and how his government intended to obtain parliament's approval of the trade deal as soon as possible.

Where was his American counterpart? No one could say for sure. The TV screens showed a still photograph of a rumpled Reagan wearing a loose blue sweater, short collar unbuttoned, signing the agreement. It looked for all the world like one of the Polaroid pictures kidnappers send out to demonstrate their victim is still alive. Reagan had rejected a more elaborate ceremony because he did not want to cut short his holiday at the Palm Springs resort of an unnamed millionaire. But reporters were assured that he had spoken on the phone to Mulroney for at least four minutes before signing the agreement.

At the crossroads: And so began what is certain to be a momentous year for Canada. If approved by the parliament—where Mulroney's Conservatives hold more than two-thirds of the seats—the trade agreement will go into effect next January 1. Also this year provincial legislatures will debate a constitutional amendment that could seriously erode the federal government powers. And, depending on the polls, there is likely to be a federal election before year's end. In such an election Canadians would pass judgment on Mulroney's restructuring of the country.

For although he may not have succeeded in solving the three perennial problems of Canadian politics—regional tensions within English-speaking Canada, Quebec's national aspirations and U.S.-control of the economy—he may have created a situation in which no subsequent national government will be able to deal with these issues directly.

The trade agreement with the U.S. and the constitutional amendment known as the Meech Lake Accord represent a significant surrender of the government's economic powers to the free market—or what the U.S. Congress determines to be the free market—and a simultaneous shift of political power to the provincial governments.

The Mulroney revolution: Elected prime minister in 1984 with a huge majority, Mulroney moved to improve relations with the U.S. Shortly after taking office he travelled to Washington to meet with Reagan. There he proudly proclaimed that Canada was once again "open for business." This

Canada: 1988 is year of living dangerously

meant his government would dismantle most of the Trudeau government's ventures into economic nationalism, particularly the Foreign Investment Review Agency (FIRA) and the National Energy Program (NEP).

Some of these goals were accomplished simultaneously as Conservatives strove to sell off government-owned enterprises. In December 1985 the Mulroney government sold the crown-owned DeHavilland aircraft company to Boeing at what amounted to a fire-sale price. The deal was swiftly approved

TRADE PACT

by the Tory replacement agency for FIRA titled, appropriately enough, Investment Canada.

Privatization was coupled with the deregulation of the nation's energy sector, particularly the dismantling of the Trudeau government's National Energy Program (NEP) of 1980. It was Pierre Trudeau's most nationalistic endeavor. It challenged the multinational corporations as well as the western oil-producing provinces and promised to provide Canadian consumers with security of supply, fair pricing and a Canadian energy industry.

It also provided tax advantages to encourage Canadian businesses to take over foreign enterprises. The goal was majority Canadian ownership of the oil and gas industry by 1990. Such a modest goal demonstrates the degree to which previous Liberal governments had allowed U.S.-based oil firms to dominate the industry. And it was also seen

in Alberta, the country's major petroleum producing province, and by the petroleum industry as a hostile seizure of jurisdiction and revenue.

The low NEP energy prices were supposed to provide a model for an equally interventionist industrial strategy. But the newly-installed Reagan administration made it clear the U.S. did not support the NEP or the industrial strategy. Canada's finance minister made the pilgrimage to Washington in 1981 to assure then-Treasury Secretary Donald Regan that Ottawa had gotten the message; the economic strategy was left to rot on the drawing boards.

Today NEP is long gone, and the Canadian petroleum industry is deregulated to the point where natural gas produced in Alberta is being sold to the U.S. at prices a third

The U.S.-Canada trade pact represents a significant surrender of the federal government's economic powers to the free market.

cheaper than those charged Canadian consumers. And in late December Investment Canada approved a deal that would put ownership of the country's largest petroleum company in U.S. hands.

The road to Meech Lake: While the economy was being expatriated back to the

U.S., Mulroney was also engaged in negotiations with the country's premiers that will likely lead to a serious erosion of the federal government's authority.

A major goal of his strategy of national reconciliation was to bring the province of Quebec formally into the national constitution. The current constitution was adopted in 1982, largely as an effort to undercut French-Canadian nationalism in Quebec. A separatist provincial government was elected there in 1976 and held an unsuccessful referendum on renegotiating Quebec's relationship with Canada in 1980. During the referendum campaign Trudeau promised Quebecers a new deal, one with entrenched language rights across the country.

But when the final constitutional deal was cooked up—late at night in the kitchen of a hotel suite—Quebec Premier Rene Levesque was not present. He refused to approve an arrangement that he believed was too centralist. Despite his opposition, the federal government went ahead and adopted the constitution.

By 1985 both Trudeau and Levesque had passed from the political scene (Levesque died of a heart attack last year). The new Quebec premier, Liberal Robert Bourassa, a close friend of Mulroney, came to office with a list of changes that had to be agreed to before Quebec would sign on. They included a right to veto any further changes to the constitution, increased powers over immigration, the explicit recognition of Quebec as a distinct society, the right to appoint supreme court judges and senators, and limitations on federal spending powers in Quebec. Although he is far from being a separatist, Bourassa maintained that Quebec was not a province *comme les autres*.

But neither are Canada's other regions like each other. Western Canadians have historically seen themselves as exploited commodity producers, forced to sell cheaply on international markets and pay dearly for goods from protected industries in Central Canada. Maritimers have seen their region steadily de-industrialized and de-populated throughout the country's history, again to serve Central Canadian interests.

If there were going to be a new deal it would not involve Quebec restructuring its relationship with a monolithic English Canada, but the regions restructuring their relationship with Ottawa. In the past this approach has always been rejected as one that would lead to the dissolution of the country. It is the Gordian knot of Canadian politics.

But at Meech Lake, the prime minister's resort outside Ottawa, Mulroney cut that knot. Last April he invited the country's 10 premiers there for a special meeting to deal with the constitution. In what appears to have been the political equivalent of an EST seminar, the men met, without any of their constitutional advisers, well into the night. Mulroney was firm—the leaders would not leave without an agreement.

That was apparently the only thing Mulroney was firm about. By morning, when the accord was struck, he had given Bourassa everything he asked for, and to make the deal work, offered the same powers to the other nine provinces. Added to this was the provinces' right to make appointments to the Canadian senate. Traditionally the senate, an unelected body, has been the resting ground for fund-raisers, defeated cabinet ministers and hacks. As such it has questionable public legitimacy, although on paper its powers are considerable.

Continued on page 22

IN THESE TIMES JAN. 20-26, 1988 9

Prime Minister Brian Mulroney promised that parliament will quickly approve the deal.



UPI Bettman Newsphotos

By Steve Askin

HARARE, ZIMBABWE

THE JOINING OF ZIMBABWE'S TWO MAIN political parties may bring the region's strongest black-led nation the political unity it urgently needs to resist an increasingly destructive South African destabilization drive.

But it probably won't bring Zimbabwe any closer to the socialist transformation both partners—head of state Robert Mugabe and Zimbabwe African Peoples Union (ZAPU) leader Joshua Nkomo—say they ardently desire. Nor will merger heal fundamental economic divisions that increase the country's vulnerability to South African sabotage.

Zimbabwe's political agenda is shaped by

SOUTHERN AFRICA

growing domestic and regional violence, the worst since the 1979 termination of white-minority rule in the country formerly known as Rhodesia.

Bloodbath: More than 200 Zimbabwean civilians have been killed in raids by the Mozambique National Resistance (MNR) since June, when the South African-backed rebel group launched a new terror campaign in retaliation for Zimbabwe's aid to Mozambique. The victims, mostly peasant families in isolated communities near the Mozambique border, often have been hacked to death with axes and machetes.

About 70 people have died during the

Zimbabwe's new political unity not likely to solve economic woes



Zimbabwean leader Robert Mugabe (right) and opposition leader Joshua Nkomo.

same period in equally brutal attacks by Zimbabwean anti-government dissidents against commercial farmers in the southwestern Matabeleland region. These massacres, however, have attracted far more international attention than the MNR raids, perhaps because their victims have been white.

The political merger aims to ease the violence by reducing political disaffection in Matabeleland, Nkomo's stronghold. It also enables Mugabe to achieve his long-held goal of a one-party state by legal and relatively democratic means. All but one of the opposition legislators in the two-house, 140-member parliament were members of Nkomo's party.

After three years of fruitless talks interspersed with harsh official action against ZAPU, Mugabe and Nkomo agreed December 22 to unite in a single, Marxist-Leninist party. The pact, awaiting formal ratification by both parties, became a practical reality on New Year's Eve, when Mugabe announced that Nkomo would be co-vice president and second secretary of the ruling Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF).

There was an element of coercion behind the merger, which coincided with Mugabe's assumption of new powers as executive president under a constitutional amendment that combined the powers of two separate top leadership posts. Had unity not been achieved before this change, ZAPU leaders knew, the ruling party might have carried out past threats to ban the opposition.

Western fear that a one-party state is inevitably totalitarian never weighed heavily in Zimbabwe's unity debate. Because the parties were divided along tribal lines—ZAPU overwhelmingly supported by the Ndebele minority, ZANU-PF by the Shona majority—most leaders on both sides long ago agreed that merger was the only way to overcome the greater threat of tribalism.

Achievement of genuine unity depends on Mugabe's actions in the next few months. To make merger work, he must bring ZAPU activists into substantial government roles, especially in Matabeleland, where Mugabe placed power in the hands of ZANU-PF stalwarts who lack a local political base.

The economic challenge: But the most difficult challenge to Mugabe is in the economic sphere. He faces smoldering discontent over government failure to produce the radical economic changes many Zimbabweans expected at independence. And he wishes to retain the confidence of white-

owned businesses and multinational corporations, that still dominate the most developed sectors of Zimbabwe's relatively sophisticated economy.

The country's main social gains since independence—and they are enormous—are those of a liberal welfare state. Minimum-wage laws have cushioned the income of the poorest Zimbabweans. And the government invested heavily in an expansion of health and education services unparalleled on the African continent.

Yet these gains mean relatively little for the 100,000 people who leave school each year and must compete for about 7,000 jobs. Nor do they satisfy land-hungry peasants, most of them still crowded into the same marginal areas set aside as "tribal trust lands" after white settlers seized the best farming areas in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Land was the central issue in Zimbabwe's freedom war, but after eight years of independence, whites—who make up less than 1 percent of the rural population—still control about 40 percent of the country's farmland.

Moreover, South African and British multinationals still dominate the country's mining and industrial sectors, though government is buying into some major industries and provides limited support for worker-run cooperatives.

Mugabe's personal commitment to socialism is rarely questioned. But many Zimbabweans grumble at the cynicism of other top officials who secretly bought large commercial farms or other business property.

Unless these problems are addressed, party merger may not end the dissident violence which plagues Matabeleland.

Black, white and blood red: The economic roots of rebellion can be seen in the most recent major dissident violence, the November killings at a Christian farming commune, which attracted much sensational news coverage but little serious analysis. The 16 victims, all white, were hacked to death in a raid on their farm in southern Matabeleland.

Like many white farmers, the Christian group had repeatedly clashed with black squatters spilling over from overcrowded peasant lands. A week before the attack, a regional official from Mugabe's government had come to the area to order squatters off the land. At that meeting, a squatter had declared that if blacks are forced off the land, the whites must also leave. When dissidents attacked, they left a note which proclaimed themselves the true vanguard of Marxist-Leninist revolution and demanded that all white settlers leave the area.

Despite the radical rhetoric, many Zimbabweans believe South Africa is the secret moving force behind these dissidents. They point out that the latest wave of killings resembled some of the violence perpetrated during the independence struggle by Rhodesian troops masquerading as black liberation fighters. The latest round of dissident violence, critics say, clearly furthers South Africa's destabilization goals.

But wherever such violence actually originates, it provides a chilling reminder that political party unity will not heal Zimbabwe's dangerous economic divisions.

Steve Askin is an *In These Times* correspondent based in Zimbabwe.

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By Diana Johnstone

PARIS

THE FRENCH ARE STARTING TO GRUMBLE about their "military-industrial complex." The term coined by President Dwight Eisenhower in his famous January 1961 farewell warning has never been fully naturalized into the French political vocabulary. It's too unorthodox for the Marxist left and too close to home for the rest of French opinion-makers.

So it was surprising to see a think piece titled "The danger of the military-industrial complex" on *Le Monde's* widely read "debates" page last November 28 by Pierre Marion, Mitterrand's first director of France's central intelligence agency, the DGSE. A former Air France executive, Marion was the only recent DGSE chief who was not a military man, and he lasted only two years on the job. His successor, Admiral Pierre Lacoste, was in charge when DGSE frogmen sank the Greenpeace ship *Rainbow Warrior* in the New Zealand port of Auckland.

The point of Marion's article was the key role of "certain pressure groups, starting with the military-industrial complex" in recent affairs or political scandals ranging from the sabotage of the *Rainbow Warrior* in 1985 to more recent revelations of illegal arms shipments to Iran.

Charles Hernu, defense minister at the time of the Greenpeace affair, keeps being grazed by these scandals, but has yet to be felled. Last November, when the bloodhounds seemed to be getting close, Hernu warned publicly that as defense minister for five years, he had "seen a lot of files" and "if I talked, it would be apt to upset a lot of people." He thereupon posed for a Playboy billboard, stretched out (fully clothed, mercifully) next to a Teddy Bear. French eroticism is endlessly inventive.

Hernu's great passion is no secret: the military. His love for the military was sufficiently starry-eyed, open and boundless to overcome senior officers' initial misgivings at seeing a left-wing government take office in 1981. The price of this love feast was a generous military budget and the sinking of the *Rainbow Warrior*.

Marion recalled that when, in June 1981, Mitterrand called on him to take over the intelligence agency, the new president vowed he would never name a military man as director because "a military man has a double allegiance, one to the state and the other to his corps." Nevertheless, wrote Marion, "very surprisingly, considering his legendary caution regarding pressure groups, Mr. Mitterrand decided—aided by his indestructible friendship with Mr. Hernu—to approve the stupid operation against the *Rainbow Warrior*." This operation—"the greatest fiasco in the history of the secret services"—was the result of pressure from the Pacific admirals, who wanted to keep the *Rainbow Warrior* from approaching the nuclear test site at Mururoa atoll in the South Pacific.

For the sake of industry: The admiral's zeal in protecting Mururoa has been explained succinctly by fellow Admiral (retired) Antoine Sanguinetti. In the Pacific nuclear testing center, officers receive double pay, in a place where there is no way to spend it. Duty in the Pacific test center is thus known in the service as the one best way to save for a retirement house in the country.

Whether in the Pacific or elsewhere, weapons are developed for the sake of the arms industry rather than to fit a strategy.



Defense Minister Charles Hernu reviewing troops. Hernu's great passion is the military.

EUROPE

Military-industrial complex won't translate to French

And the arms industry, Admiral Sanguinetti has pointed out, means everybody: "Military credits are the only way to subsidize industry as a whole"—transport, electronics, aeronautics, all major branches get a share. The chemical industry yelled about being left out, so chemical weapons were included in the last budget.

As in the U.S., officers are rewarded by retiring to executive posts in the major arms contracting companies.

The triumph of the military-industrial complex in France means that arms programs are designed to fulfill the needs of industry, and then the armed forces adapt, rather than the other way around. Admiral Sanguinetti complains that France has "integrated the armed forces into the arms industry. The minister of defense is a representative of the arms industry."

There are ample reasons for the murmurs of dissatisfaction that can be heard these days. A collapse of arms sales abroad, a crisis in French military doctrine precipitated by shifts in U.S. strategy plus the competitive weakness of French industry, despite indirect military subsidies, all suggest that the French military-industrial complex is not working. Its ingrown functioning is turning out to be bad for both military strategy and for business.

The bitter truth: A telling example is the loss of the Australian market for French military aircraft as a result of French nuclear testing. According to the January 4 *International Herald Tribune*, Australia stopped buying French Mirage jets in the last few years due to growing hostility toward France in the Pacific. Previously, Dassault had been the main supplier of aircraft for the Australian Air Force.

Thus it could be argued that by stubbornly

sticking to its nuclear test program at Mururoa, the French military-industrial complex may have killed the goose that laid the golden eggs—namely Dassault.

Dassault has been in a two-year nose dive despite help from Prime Minister Jacques Chirac, who may owe his political career to his close friend Marcel Dassault, the firm's late founder. Last autumn the bitter truth came out that Dassault had not sold a single Mirage jet for two years. Dassault's new Rafale will not be on the market until 1996. And what market? Other European NATO

There are growing signs that France put its eggs in the wrong basket. Critics say concentration on military production may have weakened the French economy.

countries are working jointly on a rival aircraft, and the trade deficit has apparently made the U.S. more aggressive than ever in moving to shove European competitors out of the aviation business.

France is losing its "out of area" arms export markets (mainly in the Mideast) without being well-placed to sell to NATO countries.

Le Monde commented last fall that "Dassault-Breguet has gone into a plunge that risks dragging down a large part of the French aeronautics industry." Dassault aircraft are in fact the final destiny of many of the products of the French arms industry, including missiles from Matra and Aero-spatiale, radar from Thomson, motors from

SMECMA, jets from Turbomeca and electronics from several other firms.

Symbiosis: It isn't as if aviation industry troubles could be compensated by the flourishing prosperity of that other pillar of the French military industrial complex, the nuclear industry.

Current Defense Minister André Giraud headed the Commissariat for Atomic Energy (CEA) in the '70s and is a devoted nucleocrat. The symbiosis between the armed forces and the CEA stems from a secret decision by France's ruling technocracy to pursue a dual strategy: nuclear weapons to enhance France's role as world power, and nuclear power plants as a transitional energy source on the way toward the plutonium economy, with its miraculous inexhaustible fast breeders.

But the fast breeder program is in trouble. The giant Superphenix prototype fast breeder at Creys-Malville on the Rhone, upstream from Lyons, was shut down last May after massive searching failed to locate the source of sodium leakage that had begun after only three months of commercial operation. And in December industry minister Alain Madelin called for months of further studies before Superphenix can be started up again, if ever.

Superphenix was counted on to produce not only limitless electricity, but also high-grade plutonium 239 for France's enlarged nuclear arsenal.

These technical problems coincided with French worries that shifts in U.S. strategic doctrine may make the country's nuclear weapons program obsolete, and that there will be no market for the excess electricity produced by France's 45 nuclear power plants. Energy demands both in France and in neighboring countries are falling far below earlier projections.

Volker Hauff recently visited France to tell Socialist, business and government leaders that the West German Social Democratic Party (SPD) is serious about phasing out nuclear energy, and is not just trying to steal Green Party votes. Hauff, a former West German minister for research and technology who authored the SPD policy, calls nuclear power an outdated technology. He stressed that solar energy can do the job but needs massive investment. The trouble is that nuclear power has benefitted from its implicit promise of unlimited military power to drain government subsidies and investment capital that could have gone to develop solar energy.

With growing signs that France put all its eggs in the wrong basket, even establishment strategic analyst Pierre Lellouche has been wondering aloud whether concentration on military production may not have weakened the French economy in comparison to Germany and Japan.

It would be nice to think that because the military-industrial complex is useless or counterproductive, it is on the way out. But Marion—and he is not alone—is pessimistic. The power of the military-industrial complex is "much more dangerous in France than in the U.S.," he wrote, both because government and business administration are much more intensely bound together and because of the absence of a counter-power such as the U.S. Senate. "The political class is not capable of controlling the military-industrial complex," he concluded.

Still, among educated citizens, criticism is becoming audible. As so often in France, under the tight lid, the pot may be starting to boil. □

By Jan Knippers Black and
Martin C. Meedler

CRACOW, POLAND

ONE EVENING LAST SUMMER, PATRONS of a sidewalk cafe in this city's Renaissance-era market square were distracted by a brawl in their midst. In a most uneven match, a young lout apparently possessed of all his physical faculties was beating and kicking another youth who appeared drunk. We had witnessed similar fights on the two previous evenings in Warsaw, and on those occasions as well, onlookers, rather than breaking up the fight, simply joined in, aiming a kick or punch at the drunk. When we asked why no one came to the aid of the victim, one Polish companion responded that the fight was "just among friends."

A few days later in Wroclaw, after spending several hours in lines trying to buy train tickets, then climbing nine floors to a postage-stamp-sized apartment rented for a princely sum from a hospital's night receptionist, we began to understand why people might spend their spare time beating up their friends.

And yet this is also a country of exquisite courtesy in which one is always addressed as "sir" or "madame," and madame is likely to have her hand bent over and kissed. Poland is a surprising country, whether one is expecting brainwashed atheists parroting an anti-U.S. party line or oppositionists terrorized into silence by Soviet troops. In fact, we were taken aback to find most Poles not only outspoken in their hostility to the Soviet Union, socialism and their own government, but also fervently Catholic and pro-Western.

The general Polish belief that the truth must be the exact opposite of what could be read in the government press creates something of an embarrassment for visiting Americans, confronted by Poles eager to congratulate them for having in Ronald Reagan such a wise and knowledgeable leader. It is clear, nevertheless, that what Poles understand very well is their own political situation, rife with subtleties and paradoxes.

The name of the game: The government of Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski has negligible popular support in any absolute sense. In practical terms, however, that is not the issue. Everyone here understands that if Poland had the government that its people truly wanted, the Soviets would read in the tanks.

So the game is to expand the people's social and economic freedoms without pushing the Russians too far. At least, that is the game as seen by most Poles and by the Solidarity trade union—which, in fact, is not only a trade union but a general representative of economic, social and political interests of workers and the middle class alike.

But for the Jaruzelski government, the game is much more complicated and even more subtle. To some extent, the government yields to popular demands for greater freedoms and hints that it would like to do more but cannot without provoking Soviet countermeasures. To Moscow's hard-liners, it argues that concessions are preferable to the economic, political and public-relations costs of repression, and in fact are in keeping with the new Gorbachov approach. Moreover, the government hopes that a policy of selective concessions will split Solidarity by appeasing moderates in the movement, even convincing some that the regime is the least of all evils.

Pawel Spiewak, an editor of the respected underground journal *Respublica*, which in September 1986 was given permission to publish openly, is well aware of the government's game. But Spiewak believes that the opposition stands to gain more than the government from any change that expands the margins of free expression.

The Soviets must themselves be a little

unsure about whether concessions will weaken or strengthen opposition sentiment, and unclear about how far they can allow Poland to develop its own direction before they have lost control and have a military-security problem on their Western border. Nevertheless, many staunch opponents of the Polish government admit reluctantly that Mikhail Gorbachov is their best hope for further liberalization—even though they find it incongruous to view any Soviet leader as a source of anything other than oppression.

Another factor in this complex set of relationships is the United States. Poland is in such a weak position in international trade, and is now so indebted, that U.S. economic credits play a vital role in the economy. Thus the Polish government must take into account the views of Washington as well as—though not as much as—those of Moscow.

Warsaw and Rome: The final part of this equation is the Roman Catholic Church. Many commentators have pointed out the central importance of Catholicism to the national self-image of Poles, helping define the country's identity in a relationship to Orthodox Russia and Protestant East Germany. And the enormous national pride in having a Polish pope has intensified both that identity and its political significance.

The government has tried at one time or another to divide the church and weaken

links with the pope as well as to discredit the church as an institution and to intimidate its leaders, but all to no avail. Jaruzelski knows now that he must maneuver with respect to the wishes of Rome as well as those of Moscow and Washington.

The position of the pope is not unambiguous here, however. As a Pole and a Catholic, he clearly sympathizes with Solidarity and its objectives. As the head of the Catholic Church worldwide, however, he must weigh other considerations. But some Poles feel he is now taking a somewhat softer line toward the Soviet Union than does the leadership of the Polish church. These skeptics think the pontiff may be bending for Soviet concessions on religious practice elsewhere in Eastern Europe and Soviet cooperation for the celebration of the impending 1,000th anniversary of the Christianization of Russia.

But the Polish church itself is not in unqualified opposition to the Jaruzelski government, aware that other possible regimes could be worse. One Solidarity leader even told us that he felt he had to help bolster Jaruzelski's position so that when Solidarity won concessions from him Jaruzelski would be strong enough to deliver on his commitments.

Partly because of this delicate and multifaceted relationship between church and



POLAND:

Between East and West

tions of their own political condition, most Poles appear to see the rest of the world in the starkest black-and-white terms, with all problems being no more than confrontations with the Soviet Union. A leading Catholic intellectual in Cracow told us he had no doubt that the KGB was financing progressive theologians in Western Catholicism.

Looking west: Nevertheless, the dynamic of political confrontation as it has evolved in Poland since the beginning of the '80s finds more counterparts in the West than in the Soviet bloc, and both sides in this struggle have looked to the West for inspiration and ideas. For example, the Polish military, in drawing up contingency plans in 1980 for the imposition of military law, reportedly sent envoys to Turkey to study the model employed by that country's armed forces. Solidarity, meanwhile, has established links with repressed dissidents in a number of Western countries. A Solidarity group visiting the U.S. recently arranged a meeting with South Africans struggling against apartheid, and a delegation of Chileans organizing against President Augusto Pinochet paid a visit to Solidarity leaders last year in Poland. Recognition of the commonality of interests with Chilean dissidents is reflected in a story making the rounds in Warsaw. Pinochet, the story goes, sent a telegram to Jaruzelski in December 1981 congratulating him on the successful imposition of martial law, adding "Now please return my dark glasses."

One might expect, in light of such groping for international solidarity, that Poles would sympathize with small countries in Central America that try to assert their independence of a dominant U.S., viewing them as comparable to a Poland struggling to get free of its own big brother. But for most Polish intellectuals, the U.S. government, as the leader of the anti-Soviet struggle, must by definition always be right. The associate editor of a Catholic newspaper, on thinking about the matter, did conclude that the arming of Polish exiles to harass the government from foreign bases, on the contra model, would have completely counterproductive results. The editor thought such an effort would make the government more repressive, reform more difficult to achieve and the people's lives harder, and guessed that the same would be

true in Nicaragua. Ironically, though, while most of our Polish contacts were quick to condemn Nicaragua as Marxist, a Marxist political scientist and specialist in constitutional law at the University of Wroclaw was baffled by that designation. He could find no sense in which Nicaragua might be considered a Marxist state. Rather, he found the Sandinista government to be disappointingly bourgeois.

Worst of both worlds: Poland is surprising in other ways. On the whole, state enterprises seem disasters in terms of efficiency and service to the public. But a great many small private businesses now function. That's one concession achieved partly by Solidarity's efforts, although the dissolution of collective farms and the reconstitution of private farming was due to rural resistance that long antedates Solidarity. Private enterprise has helped to absorb the energies of the postwar population bulge and to mitigate economic rigidities and bottlenecks of the sort found elsewhere in Eastern Europe. But such essentials as housing and telephones are scarce, and

the worst of both worlds: Eastern inefficiency and Western debt. Some of Poland's economic woes must be attributed to Western-style austerity measures imposed by creditors and their collection agency, the International Monetary Fund. Nevertheless, the waiting in line that is required for almost any transaction results not so much from shortage of goods or facilities as from shortage of incentive to serve.

Poles vs. Poles: The feature of the working-class state most readily apparent to outsiders is that while employees see little to gain in performing their job well, they also see little to risk in performing it poorly. Thus the job itself becomes the worker's stock in trade. A waitress may eventually take your order or a hotel clerk may assign you to a room in return for humble entreaties rather than holding out for a bribe, but no service or transaction is simply routine. One sociologist calls it a massive conspiracy by Poles as workers against Poles as consumers.

A social psychologist from the University of Warsaw spoke to us of the countervailing trends of the '80s. On the one hand, he felt that the growth of Solidarity had a bracing effect on the spirits of his compatriots. On the other hand, even though martial law was lifted in 1983, the pervasiveness of spying remains such that one never knew whom to trust. Such suspicions, he believed, threatened the country's very social fabric.

This is hardly a time of great optimism. While the struggle between the Poles and their government appears to have settled into a kind of low-intensity equilibrium, most Solidarity leaders believe that the initiative now rests with the government, which holds most of the cards for the long run. Nevertheless, the Polish people have a well-earned reputation for quixotic efforts and almost fanatic nationalism. No one who has followed the accounts of Polish soldiers on horseback charging tanks, or who has seen the medieval center of Warsaw, reconstructed brick by brick after having been bombed to rubble, would hasten to discount the prospects for Solidarity. □

Jan Knippers Black is a research professor of public administration at the University of New Mexico, where **Martin C. Meedler** is a professor of political science.

state, and because the Catholic Church is the only independent institution that the government has not been able to attack head on, the church has been able to provide some shelter for Solidarity's secular endeavors. As in Chile and other Western states under heavy-handed dictatorships, Polish church periodicals have given space to secular themes and secular journals have carried articles by clergy. The weekly newspaper *Tygodnik Powszechny*, generally viewed as an organ of Solidarity, also has a semi-official relationship with the church, providing a measure of protection for the paper itself and those who write for it. Its chief editor Jerzy Turowicz notes, however, that the government can limit the paper's circulation through its control of newsprint. At this point it publishes only 80,000 eight-page copies a week, although demand is much higher.

Meanwhile, the business of underground publication continues to flourish and to gain respect. Contributions to subterranean literature are now accepted by many university faculties as meeting requirements for promotion or acquisition of tenure. The only academics who continue to view Solidarity as an impractical and rather disreputable movement are on law faculties, whose members often have useful links to government.

Despite the subtleties of their percep-

Poland is blown by winds from Moscow, Washington and Rome. The Solidarity trade union is another important factor in this complex set of relationships.

salaries remain shockingly low in the face of a steady inflation. A university professor, for example, earns the equivalent of about \$80 a month.

Economically, Poland is rather like a transitional zone between East and West, but Western influence and Western links do not constitute an unmixed blessing. It seems, in fact, that Poland has acquired

EDITORIAL

IN THESE TIMES

"...with liberty and justice for all"

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HAVING BEEN SHOWN UP
 BY THE NOBEL PEACE PRIZE WINNER,
 CAPTAIN AMERICA HAS ONLY
 ONE REMARK...



Sabotaging peace to save a murderous policy

With the Central American presidents meeting to assess the progress of the Esquipulas II peace plan, the Reagan administration has been pulling out all the stops in its campaign to keep its dirty war on track. Two weeks ago a delegation from Washington, including national security adviser, Lt. Gen. Colin L. Powell and Assistant Secretary of State Elliott Abrams, went to Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala and Costa Rica to tell the presidents they had better blame Nicaragua at the January 15 meeting for the treaty's lack of success.

The pressure was heavy-handed. Gen. Powell told the four presidents that they should not rely on Washington for any more economic aid if the war ended. "Think this through carefully, folks," he warned. "If some of you think, as you have been saying over the past couple of years, that the freedom fighters are not useful, you are about to get your wish."

This was too much even for House Democratic whip, Rep. Tony Coelho of California. Gen. Powell, Coelho said, was trying to "manipulate the peace process to avoid a settlement." And an aide to House Speaker Jim Wright (D-TX) stated the obvious: "our government has had the ability to make this thing work and has refused to do so."

But despite these pro forma protests by Democratic leaders in Congress, the message got through. El Salvador's President Jose Napoleon Duarte, who remains in office only because the Reagan administration has told the Salvadoran army to leave him in place, snapped to attention. "I will go to Costa Rica," he said, "and tell Ortega directly that he hasn't complied."

In fact, however, none of the Central American nations have complied fully with the August 7 treaty, except Costa Rica, which shut down the contra political office in San Jose only last week. And the major responsibility for their failure to do so lies with the Reagan administration.

Honduras, for example, has made no effort—despite its recent claims to the contrary—to close down contra bases on its territory or to cut contra supply lines. Unlike Nicaragua, which has appointed a genuinely independent National Reconciliation Commission, Honduras set up a commission so subservient to the government that it has not even raised the contra bases as an issue to consider.

Overall, with the possible exception of El Salvador, Nicaragua has done more to comply with the Esquipulas II treaty than any of its neighbors. It has permitted the major opposition newspaper *La Prensa* and a critical Catholic radio station to reopen, freed about 1,000 political prisoners under a partial amnesty and let some exiled priests and other expatriates return home. And it has held two indirect meetings with contra leaders, while insisting that it is the United States with whom it should be negotiating.

Of course, the Sandinistas have been so cooperative because they have everything to gain and nothing to lose by ending the war. While U.S. intervention is disruptive of the four other nations' societies, and increasing U.S. military presence oppressive, the governments of these countries, Costa Rica excepted, are less eager for peace. In varying degrees, all of them are dependencies of the United States. For them, the war and their support of Yankee imperialism is disruptive and potentially dangerous, but U.S. aid is making them rich and keeping them in power.

So Powell's is no empty threat. And if the administration succeeds in forcing its Central American clients to do its dirty work, Reagan will once again give Congress an excuse to renew contra aid on February 3, when the issue comes up again in the House.

This points up the difference between the administration's commitment to its Central American policy and the opposition to it in Congress. Most House members—not to mention senators—support U.S. neocolonialism in Central America. Contra aid comes close to being defeated only because such a consistently large majority of the American people oppose the idea of our nation overthrowing foreign governments by force and violence. Therefore to vote for more aid requires an excuse. The administration has been brilliant in providing these time and again, but sooner or later the American people should catch on and stop letting their representatives play this murderous game. We hope it will be sooner.

LETTERS

DSA I

JOEL BLEIFUSS' ACCOUNT OF THE RECENT DEMOCRATIC Socialists of America (DSA) convention (*ITT*, Dec. 16, 1987), focused inordinately (though accurately) on the factional maneuverings over the elections to the National Executive Committee. But he failed to mention the widespread agreement among delegates that the past year has witnessed the most intense period of DSA-inspired national political activity since the 1982 merger of the New American Movement and the Democratic Socialist Organizing Committee. DSA played a key catalytic role in bringing the labor movement into last year's April 25 Mobilization for Peace and Justice in Central America and Southern Africa. Successful DSA-sponsored national tours of African National Congress leaders and Nicaraguan student activists further strengthened our anti-imperialist work. And the success of the DSA-initiated November 17, 1987 National Day of Action Against Poverty—which involved thousands of Americans in over 100 cities—served as one more demonstration of the resurgence of left-wing economic populism. Plans are now in the works to follow up with an even broader coalitional "Economic Justice Project," which would focus on the necessity of expanding the public sector (funded through defense cuts and progressive taxation) if decent health care, housing, education and employment opportunities are to be available to all Americans.

Bleifuss' only factual error is on the extent of DSA's membership loss. He asserts that "DSA has lost 40 percent of its membership in the past three years." In fact, over the past four years DSA's fully paid-up, current membership has fallen from 7,000 to 5,000, a decline of 28 percent. Our renewal rate remains about a constant 80 percent, but recruitment has fallen off to only 500 members per year, less than half of what it was during the first two years of the merger. Also, a once-only direct mail campaign in 1983 netted 1,000 members. Since the 1986 Democratic Senate victories and the defeat of Supreme Court nominee Robert Bork, both DSA and the broader left have shown encouraging signs of revival.

DSA's growing role in Jesse Jackson's campaign and our hiring of veteran black labor activist Shakoor Aljuwani as our field director and anti-racist coordinator should strengthen DSA's contributions to the struggle for economic and racial justice. With greater attention to local organizing and an aggressive recruitment campaign DSA will, we hope, be a central player in the revitalization of a post-Reagan left. As an unorganized socialist is a contradiction in terms, we invite every *ITT* reader to join our renewed effort to build a vibrant, multi-tendency democratic socialist organization. (For more information write: DSA, 15 Dutch St., Suite 500, New York, NY 10038).

Nathanael Fortune
Cambridge, Massachusetts

DSA II

ALEXANDER COCKBURN (*ITT*, Dec. 23, 1987) makes several inaccurate assertions about the relationship between the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) and the 1984 and 1988 Jackson campaigns. Cockburn does not cite any source in his article, has never attended a DSA conven-

tion, nor did he speak to any of the DSA staff or elected leadership. Let me briefly set the historical record straight:

Cockburn claims DSA did not endorse Jesse Jackson in 1984 because "Irving Howe let it be known that if DSA said anything good about the reverend he would bolt..." Howe never made such a threat nor did he play a role in the November 1983 DSA convention's decision not to endorse a primary candidate. DSA did not endorse a candidate because we realized that while many of our members would back Jackson (if and when he announced), another significant portion of our membership (mainly trade union and NOW activists) was already committed to Mondale. DSA's membership was split—as was the broader democratic left. So the November 1983 convention resolution encouraged members to work for either Jackson or Mondale. In December 1987 the DSA convention endorsed Jackson by a 9 to 1 margin not only because he is the only candidate articulating an anti-militarist and social democratic politics, but also because no other candidate has significant support from any of the major progressive constituencies.

Cockburn alludes to "the retirement of DSA Chair Michael Harrington who is very seriously ill..." In reality, Mike Harrington remains a very active co-chair of DSA while he courageously fights cancer.

Cockburn contends that "the faction of DSA sympathetic to Howe's [anti-Jackson] posture...had the better of it" over their "younger...and their more radical opponents." This is bewildering, given that the convention overwhelmingly endorsed Jackson, a position with which Howe strongly disagrees. Cockburn may be referring to the "Socialist Unity" caucus which won a significant majority on the National Executive Committee (NEC). But this caucus backed the Jackson endorsement and work within the Rainbow Coalition. It was a loose, multi-tendency grouping that included members who have an affinity for Howe's politics and members who frequently disagree with him. What both Howe and members of DSA share is mutual respect and willingness at times to agree to disagree.

Nor was the convention divided along generational lines, with "younger cadres" determinedly struggling for a Jackson endorsement. There was no evidence of division along age lines in the votes on issues before the convention nor in the balloting for the NEC. In fact, the median age of incoming NEC members is 37 (with only three of the 24 members over 45) and the alleged "pro-Howeites" are as young as the rest of

the NEC.

Cockburn asserts that the Jackson campaign's momentary flip-flop over whether to accept a DSA endorsement reflects "a comical failure of the DSA to establish any political rapport with the man deemed to be one of the most progressive forces within the Democratic Party." None of us knows what internal politicking within the Jackson camp yielded the hesitancy about seeking our endorsement. What we do know is that since June 1987 Mike Harrington has worked with Jackson as an adviser on social and economic policy matters and has written several of his major speeches. Our field director and anti-racism coordinator Shakoor Aljuwani has been meeting with the Jackson national staff in Chicago to map out DSA's role in the campaign.

Joseph M. Schwartz
DSA National Executive Committee
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Some gall

IF IN THESE TIMES REALLY DEPENDS ON ITS READERS and respects their intelligence, how come it foists on us the so-called "Inside Story" by John Judis (*ITT*, Dec. 23, 1987) in an issue that carried an excellent report on El Salvador and effective contributions by Jim Naureckas, Diana Johnstone, Alexander Cockburn and Susan J. Douglas?

Much space is taken up by Judis for fatuous, flatulent drivel, but the main thrust is to confuse the political picture with his continuing right-wing distortion of the record in favor of misleaders in Congress. He pontifically anoints as "most principled" and "most effective" House Speaker Jim Wright (D-TX) and Sens. Warren Rudman (R-NH) and Sam Nunn (D-GA), three politicians whose record on such burning issues as Central America and arms control ranges from fairly good on rare occasions, to very bad or simply collapsing before Ronald Reagan's red-baiting.

The peace movement will probably have to work often on and with Wright, quite possibly also Nunn. But it only makes such work more difficult if they are presented as noble tribunes of the people to be followed instead of rather sad characters to be pressured.

Judis has the same right as other *ITT* readers to present his views in letters to the editor, or better still by moving over to the *New Republic*, which should be delighted to have him. To call upon readers for special contributions that will help pay his salary takes some gall.

Victor Pasche
San Francisco

Deadly emotions

SALIM MUWAKKIL (*ITT*, Dec. 16, 1987) IS COVERTLY insinuating—in concert with the mainstream media—that Chicago Mayor Harold Washington had a death wish because he blindly continued to eat the soul food of his ancestors. He is telling us that Washington was a fool because, "there is a growing awareness among more educated blacks that more care needs to be taken in terms of their health." Muwakkil is also saying that Washington was a victim because soul food was created from slave-owners' trash.

So, Mayor Washington comes out of "deadly tradition in black America" a foolish victim with a death wish, exactly what *Chicago Tribune* columnist Mike Royko called him in his article following the mayor's untimely death. I wonder if there was an autopsy done and, if so, what was the exact cause of his death.

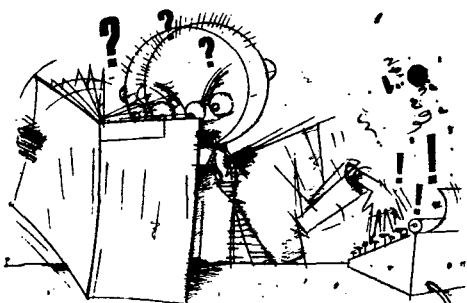
Political deaths in this country are peculiar things indeed, but when the "liberal press" jumps in and makes accusations that the dead politician was actually responsible for his own death, some whistles must blow.

Mayor Washington was no fool. I was shocked to read the insinuation in Royko's piece, but to see the same attitude given a "11 page in *In These Times* by a black liberal journalist was demoralizing. A lot rode on Mayor Washington's re-election, stress is job-related and can cause many forms of heart disease. But this was not mentioned in either article.

Emotions play a larger part in heart disease than most people would like to believe because it's harder to explain, but the point has to be made. We are all ill-served by hackneyed notions of blacks who cannot take responsibility for themselves or their diets.

As for smoking and drinking, they, too, are habits that are linked to the emotions and should not be matters of legislation.

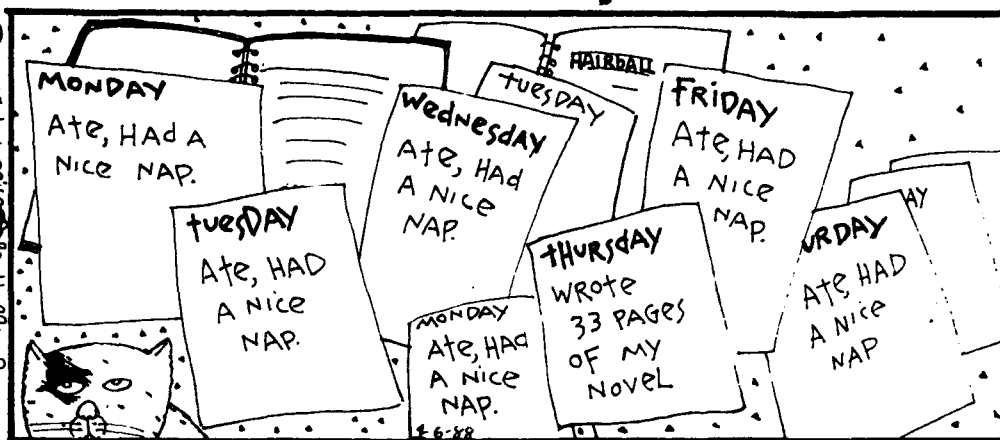
Cheryl Rose
Palo Alto, Calif.



SYLVIA



by Nicole Hollander



By David R. Dye

E SQUIPULAS II IS FALTERING. WHAT BEGAN with such hope for Central America last August 7 has run up against barriers which, though predictable, were thought possible to skirt. Instead of providing an exit from the negotiating muddle left behind by Contadora, the Arias Plan faces the prospect of turning into something similar, a framework for continuing fruitless debate until another proposal surfaces. One now formulates the query, "After Esquipulas, what?"

In Nicaragua, where the Sandinistas have been able to make little progress in achieving a ceasefire with the contras and a political dialogue with internal civilian opponents has broken down, the stalemate is palpable. In its wake, Congress has been passing purportedly non-lethal aid to the contras in dribbles, portents of a much larger and definitely lethal flow in February.

The reasons for the peace plan's stagnation will be debated for some time to come. But one of them, perhaps not the most important, is undoubtedly a defect of design in the plan itself. The flaw lies precisely in what most distinguishes Esquipulas II from its Contadora predecessor, namely its ostensible concern for the "democratization" of the five Central American nations.

By now it is more than apparent that the democratic evenhandedness of the Central American plan is anything but that. As a clause in the Esquipulas text, "democratization" was directed primarily at Nicaragua and against the country's revolutionary power structure. Imposing criteria for the

Will the revolution be put up for grabs?



Costa Rican President Oscar Arias: his plan raises questions over Nicaraguan "democratization."

"democratization" of Nicaragua has almost become a popular sport; not only do the contras and the internal opposition to the Sandinistas have their versions, but the U.S. House of Representatives, through the recent Chandler Amendment to the foreign aid bill, put its two cents in. As everyone

is aware, such concern with the niceties of political definition is not lavished on any of Nicaragua's neighbors.

Political logic: This has its logic. After all, the peace plan had to be made salable, above all in markets like the United States and Costa Rica, where cheap political merchandise thrives and where handbills had already been sold proclaiming the Sandinistas the anti-democrats of the '80s. Which meant, in effect, that politicians who just might be willing to come to some sort of accommodation with the Sandinistas, realizing they could not be beaten into submission, needed a bit of principle with which to cover their political behinds. For these, Esquipulas II seemed admirably tailored, for it promised that after turning Nicaragua into a "Western liberal democracy," you could vote the Sandinistas out.

But there were problems. A journalist asked President Daniel Ortega that \$270 million question, "If your party lost an election, would you turn over power to the opposition?", to which Ortega replied, "We could turn over the government, not power." Pressed to explain what he meant by this important distinction, the Nicaraguan leader made clear that if an opposition government attempted to do away with the achievements of the revolution, the Sandinista Front would lead a popular insurrection against it. The message was simple if not very subtle: "Democracy" in Nicaragua cannot be a vehicle for returning to the past.

This was not good enough for the political arbiters. An indignant Oscar Arias came out swinging: in his authoritative interpretation, the peace plan would not be a success if the Sandinista revolutionaries did not submit their revolution to popular ratification and if defeated, retire gracefully from the field. This democratic refrain was music to the ears of those in and out of Congress who are preparing to funnel money to Nicaragua's right-wing political parties. But how realistic is it?

Power and elections: The Costa Rican Nobel laureate is a Sussex-educated social

scientist who has written tomes about his country's power structure. There is reason to presume he is familiar with modern thinking about the necessary social preconditions for "Western" liberal democracy. One of the tenets of the new political science is that a stable alternation of political parties in *office* (not "in power") occurs only in stable societies, ones in which a basic consensus about the rules and purposes of the social order prevails. As any casual observer will note, revolutionary Nicaragua is assuredly not one of these societies.

Another commonly accepted piece of wisdom is that elections in democratic countries rarely put *power*, in the sense Ortega intended—the opportunity to change the rules of the social order—in question. When they do, they are commonly followed by strong military reactions, as Salvador Allende learned shortly before his death. Arias presumably knows all this, so it is puzzling that he has committed his political prestige to a plan that presupposes Sandinista agreement to put power, i.e., their revolution, up for grabs.

No revolution worth its salt has ever allowed itself to be reversed through the ballot. Whatever one thinks of it, one can hardly be so foolish as to believe that the Sandinista revolution, after having kept Reagan's hordes at bay for six years, is not worth its salt.

To imagine that something is about to take place that has not happened before in history, and which the previous experience of humanity suggests is impossible, may be presumptuous but at the level of idea entails no risk. To base a diplomatic plan

Elections in democratic countries rarely put the rules of social order in question. If so, they lead to military conflict.

aimed at ending a war on such a premise is altogether another matter.

The Sandinistas, who took the peace plan as they found it, seeing in it openings through which to avoid the trap yawning in front of them, have carried it as far as they could. At this point they are perhaps taken aback by the current barriers to their undoubted diplomatic cleverness. Disdaining their civilian opponents, they have perhaps also missed a chance to consolidate their own variety of democracy during the Esquipulas opening. But they are clearly not intimidated by the specter of the \$270 million that Reagan and Reagan's opponents raise before them.

With a Central American summit now in progress, a rethinking of premises is in order. Those incapable of the objectivity required by statesmanship will be incapable of the required rethinking. Those of more flexible mind will have to ponder what is more important to them—insistence on a safe and virtuous political illusion, or the chance to conclude a shameful war that has once again committed the honor of the American nation to the destruction of another country.

David Dye writes frequently for *In These Times* from Nicaragua.

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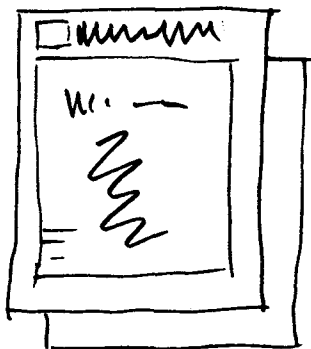
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Through foreign eyes

One of the interests of a brief spell out of the country—I have spent three weeks in Ireland, trundling between Ardmore, County Waterford and the Mercy Hospital in Cork where my mother is ill—is to study different styles of international press coverage. In hand is the *London Sunday Times* of January 3, which announced flatly in its headlines that "Alfonsin Loses His War Against Military Thugs." Maria Laura Avignolo's story from Buenos Aires went straight to the point, in a manner somewhat akin to the decorous rhythms of most foreign reporting in the U.S. mainstream press: "President Raul Alfonsin of Argentina, in a series of concessions to notorious military figures over the Christmas holiday, has caved in completely to the men who turned his country into a charnel-house during the Dirty War. It was the worst new year present Alfonsin could have given his countrymen: a series of humiliating concessions to figures whose punishment was civilian society's monument to the many thousands of Argentines killed by the armed forces during the years of military government."

Avignolo described Alfonsin's promotion of the notorious killer Lt. Alfredo Astiz. In a white dress uniform and surrounded by family and admirers, Astiz took up his post on December 29 aboard the British-built frigate *Hercules*. Shouts of "Long Live the Fatherland" and "Death to the Bolshies" filled the air.

Aside from this humiliating collapse, ornamented by an empty protestation that he never wanted to see Astiz on active service again, Alfonsin granted temporary home leave to eight generals and colonels serving "rigorous" terms in prison for violating human rights. Among them was Colonel Roberto Rualdes, accused of 20 murders and 100 disappearances in the greater Buenos Aires area. Alfonsin personally allowed the men to go home for Christmas in a deal struck with the chief of the army to avoid further military unrest. When the sight of these generals provoked widespread indignation, the ministry of defense hastily announced that they had merely been transferred to the military hospital. This claim contrasted oddly with the appearance of several of the names of these murderers on the waiting list to use the tennis courts at the military club.

Similarly refreshing is the reporting in *The Irish Times* on the Soviet Union by one of the best correspondents in Moscow, Connor O'Clery. Most if not all U.S. journalists in Moscow perceive their duty to be essentially that of demonstrating to their readers back home that capitalism is a superior system. They are also politically illiterate, since nothing in their culture or education has prepared them to understand anything of how politics work in the Soviet Union. Better educated and less concerned with defending the honor of the West, O'Clery regularly files informative copy. On January 6 he noted a staff strike in a Moscow food store, prompted by new work practices introduced under *perestroika* or "restructuring." Then O'Clery went on to note that the closure of the food store and other industrial disputes at the giant engine works in the city of Yaroslavl at the end of 1987 illustrated that the reform program cannot be imposed arbitrarily on workers and carries the seeds of industrial unrest.

ASHES & DIAMONDS

By Alexander Cockburn

In the case of the dispute in Yaroslavl, workers gathered at the factory gates waving posters and demanding a meeting with Vitaly Doletsky, director general of the Avtoizel enterprise. The sight apparently sent shock waves through the city's administrative structure. A meeting of workers and management was called with members of the city's Soviet and party committee in attendance. The dispute, according to O'Clery, was about the length of the workday and the number of Saturdays to be worked in 1988. The administration laid down that shifts be 10 minutes longer and 15 rather than 20 Saturdays be workdays. Spontaneous rallies erupted with speakers favoring another option, a still-longer shift and eight Saturday workdays. This would mean higher pay, as "unofficial" Saturday workdays carried overtime. But it seems "the issue was not so much one of money

British newspapers make a refreshing contrast to ours.

as of the right to consultation—at a time when workers feel threatened by stories of sweeping factory reforms and rumors of price rises."

The crisis of Yaroslavl blew over when delegates from the 40,000 workers voted narrowly to adopt the management line with some cuts in official Saturday work. In accord with *glasnost* the entire affair was reported in the Soviet press. Evidently the reaction of the workers in Yaroslavl goes to the very heart of the future of *perestroika*. For Soviet workers, the Brezhnev era was in many ways an era of material prosperity, which will take on greater luster as *perestroika* brings tightened work rules and layoffs and an increased cost of living. Will the Communist Party of the Soviet Union ever edge anywhere near a confrontation—or series of confrontations—with the working class, of the kind suggested by the Yaroslavl episode? Certainly not; and this offers important perspectives on the future of economic restructuring.

Finally, *The London Observer's* Washington correspondent, Simon Hoggart, depicted the commander-in-chief in unflattering terms on January 3, under the headline "A Year of Sleepy, Hollow Ron." "Ronald Reagan spends much of his time asleep, but his waking hours are just as dreamy," wrote Hoggart. "Last year it was learned that the Reagans like to be in their pajamas by 6 p.m. and so, some weeks, spend more than half their time in nightwear." Hoggart then related incidents of Reagan's goofiness, some known and some new—at least to me. According to Hoggart, when Reagan took communion in an Episcopalian church for the first time in 1980, Nancy suggested he copy everything she did. She accidentally dropped her wafer in the wine, so he did the same, handing back the startled minister a sodden mess. When Michael Deaver—that great man who, at least on his own account, snatched Reagan from the jaws of the ultra warmongers—arrived in Reagan's bedroom in January 1981 and told him he was to be inaugurated in two hours, Reagan said, "Does this mean I have to get

up?" This could have been drollery. It would have been Brechtian if Ron had taken the oath of office in his dressing gown.

Unequal exchange

Palestinians in the West Bank, Gaza and Israel itself rebel; even the U.S. is moved to a little show of protest in the United Nations against Israel's deportations. The mainstream's discussion of how the situation might be alleviated swings between plaintive pieties ("tragic dilemma") or chiliastic apprehension ("ticking time bomb"). But every now and again, usually swaddled in meiosis, one comes across articulation of Meir Kahane's view, which at least has the advantage of honest clarity: that the only way to deal with the problem is to drive the Arabs out of "greater Israel" altogether. This approach will no doubt receive increasing attention in the U.S. in the coming phase, so it's instructive to see how it is being articulated inside Israel itself, courtesy of Professor Israel Shahak's admirable selections of the Hebrew-language press.

In the mainstream newspaper *Davar*, on August 3, 1987, Teddy Preuss addressed the matter directly: "The terms 'transfer' and 'repatriation' have a negative connotation, and rightly so. They are usually just polite ways of describing mass deportation or forced exchange of population, as was done, for example, on the Indian subcontinent during the independence celebrations of India and Pakistan and later after the wars the two had. During the war of independence some 600,000 Arabs were forced to leave their homes and a larger number of Jews left the Arab states, leaving all their property behind."

Then Preuss advances the proposition that less brutal transfers had occurred "at least when looked at from a long-term perspective." He mentions the "population exchange" between Greece and Turkey after World War I, not a pleasant experience for those undergoing it certainly, but "that operation prevented a disaster in the style of Lebanon in the '70s and '80s. Nationalities, religions, races and ethnic groups living together are not, except for the case of Switzerland, a prescription for a good neighborhood, even in the Holy Land."

Preuss then gets down to business, which is to propose a moderate version of Kahane's scheme for transferring the Arab populations of a "Greater Eretz Israel" (i.e., including Gaza and the West Bank) to neighboring Arab states. Preuss thinks that it is politically and diplomatically impossible and so: "3.6 million Jews now live in Israel and 800,000 non-Jews, most of them Arabs. Beyond the Green Line [separating Israel from the territories] live 1.5 million Arabs and 60,000 Jews (whose number changes according to various definitions)...Since...the only solution is not a transfer, its meaning should be examined. (The) 60,000 Jews beyond the Green Line are not a critical mass like the 800,000 Arabs in Israel, but there was never a clear balance of numbers in any transfer. Therefore it would not be absurd to propose that these two groups should be exchanged. The Jewish settlers shall be repatriated to their homes in Tel Aviv while the Arabs from the Galilee shall be transferred to a Palestinian state to be

established in Gaza and the West Bank. Obviously one would need to keep records of land property and here we may expect some help from the superpowers. The Jewish settlers from Kiryat Arba, for example, could settle in Nazareth while the Arabs from Upper Nazareth would settle in Ma'ale Adonim. The differences in the value of property shall be invested in building houses for the Arabs leaving Nazareth."

Notice the timbre of sweet reason soaped over this criminal fantasy. Preuss even suggests that if Kahane, Levinger and their cohorts insist on living in Greater Eretz Israel, they will be able to apply to the Palestinian Ministry of the Interior for an immigration visa.

The thoughtful provision of a subsidy for new Arab homes should make this plan particularly popular with Zionist social democrats around the world. Indeed Professor Shahak, Chairman of the Israeli League for Human and Civil Rights, himself points out that proposals for the total expulsion of Arabs from the land of Israel are as old as Zionism itself and are an integral part of the annals of what is referred to as "socialist" Zionism. As Professor Shahak adds, in contrast to these "socialist" dreams, "the self-declared bourgeois tendency was interested in the exploitation of cheap Arab laborers rather than in their expulsion."

Of course plans for "transfer" can be more virtuously contemplated if bogus scholarship can be mustered to "prove" that Arabs have no real connection to the land of Israel, and a 1975 pamphlet published by the Pedagogic Secretariat of the Israeli Ministry of Education and Culture set out to do just that, concluding that "Giving to the refugees financial compensation for their property means both doing justice from the material point of view and demolishing their claims about their supposed connections to their land." This ludicrous pamphlet was approvingly quoted by Avraham Heller in the Hebrew-language paper *Ma'ariv* on September 21, 1987. He added, "Just as their forefathers left some Arab land or some Arab area and came to live in the areas that are today the State of Israel, so now it does not mean a national rooting out, if the grandsons of these settlers will return to the inheritance of their fathers in the countries of their origin...This is the only way to drain the pus as the Royal British Committee (i.e. the Peel Committee of 1937) recommended. This pus which causes shedding of blood and which endangers the existence of the State of Israel." ■

Pamphlets & Leaflets for Today

How Japan Won the War \$1. De-throning her war lords, giving ours carte blanche.

After 1984 \$1. An action program for democrats.

Memo from A.D.4500 \$1. Culmination of civilization's current suicide preparations.

War on Milk \$4. Why does Food & Drug Administration forbid research into immune qualities of milk to treat arthritis, asthma, hay fever, other ills?

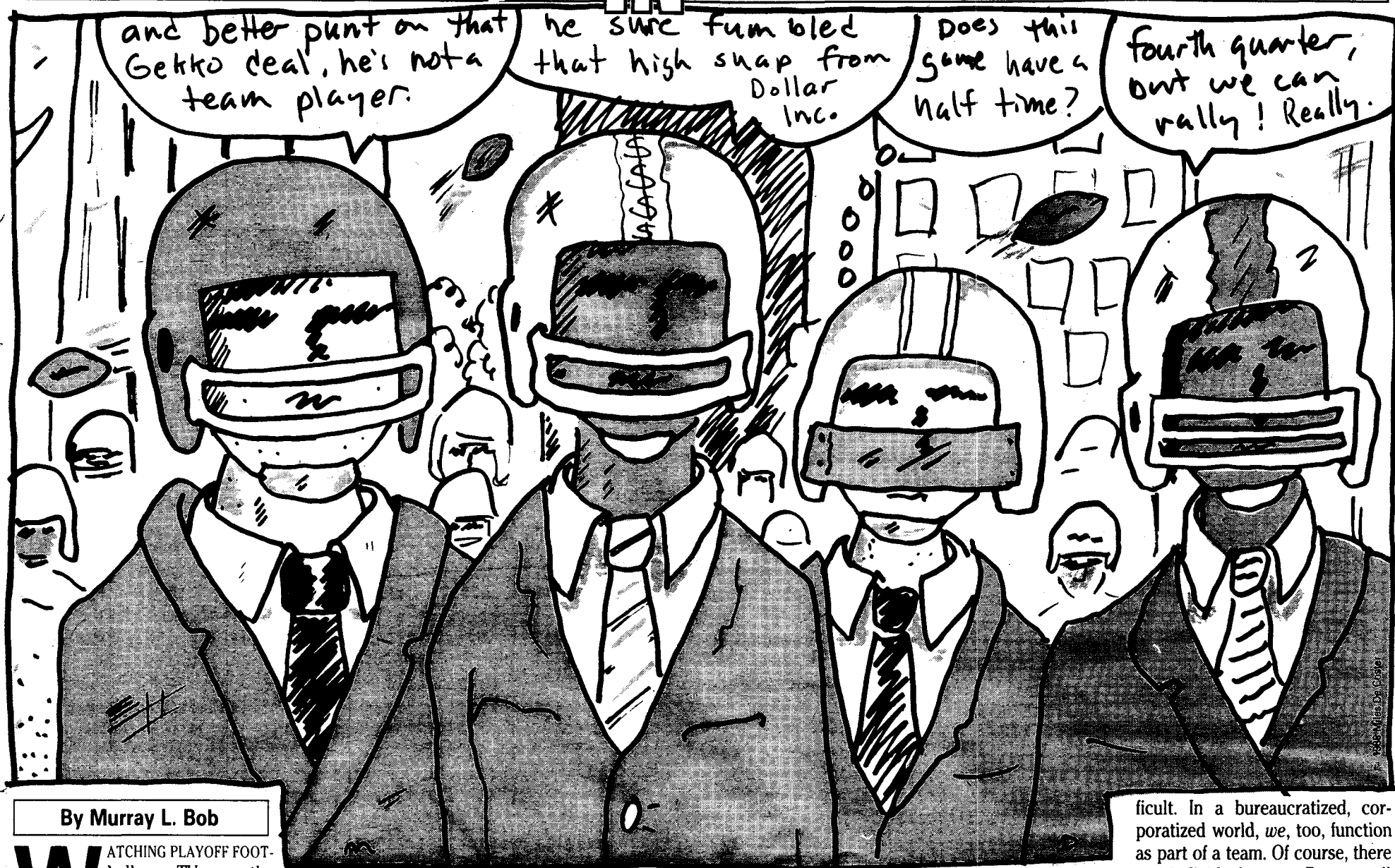
Atomic Radiation in Minnesota \$1. Power company and University of Minnesota snow job on public to sell nuclear power.

Minnesota Energy Inventory \$2. Where we get it, how we use it; conservation programs.

Barter and the Price System \$4. Discussion of mutual aid as alternative to "survival of the fittest."

Civic Information Council
Box 12861
St. Paul, MN 55112

LIFE IN THE U.S.



By Murray L. Bob

WATCHING PLAYOFF FOOTBALL on TV recently made me realize just how perfectly suited the medium is to sports. Indeed, it is what TV consistently does best. Imperial Rome had its bread and circuses; Imperial America has its beer and football. The circuses had their bitter critics in the days of decline. Football, too, has its critics. But it is clear that nothing else so effectively opiates the masses—especially the masses of males.

How very appropriate that the games are mostly on Sunday. What Sunday morning religion is barely able to accomplish any longer—purification, catharsis, release, inspiration—afternoon football now does, in spades, in its stead.

I speak not as critic but as zealot. But the big game does more than cleanse us, cum religion; it unites us as a nation perhaps more effectively than anything else. Thus, every national leader *has* to appear at a game from time to time, for in the game—especially The Big One—this disparate nation becomes one. Rich and poor, black and white, pull for their team.

Symbol over substance: It is an example of American social ingenuity to have so effectively palliated racism through sport. It used to be said that blacks were only allowed to make it big in the entertainment business, of which mass sport is a part. The point too easily overlooked was that if they were going to be allowed to make it anywhere, what better place, in terms

The emotional payoffs of watching the NFL playoffs

of P.R., than on the playing field—with the whole world watching. Here, the black male, the big loser in the real world, could come off as the big winner—withal in a token or play world—a massive triumph of image over reality, symbol over substance.

But let us dwell for a moment on the point that what the game is all about is winning and losing. Why is this so enormously appealing? Because in “real life” the truth that ultimately emerges is that winning and losing are essentially meaningless. Nothing fails like success. Certainly nothing fades like success. But if there is no real winning and losing, what then is the point?—especially since we are brought up to believe that “competition is what this country is all about.”

Just because maturity demonstrates the emptiness of the competitive ethos, it does not follow that we can easily handle the ideological vacuum created by that realization. And because we are still stuck with the old competitive code and nothing else even remotely rivals it in spiritual pulling power, we need at least a symbolic affirmation of the importance of winning. Sport in particular, contest in general, fills the ideological

void providing a comic-strip version of Darwinian survival of the fittest that anyone can understand. After the playoffs, the losers seem

SPORT

to completely disappear. No one talks of those teams any longer. The message is clear: You lose your very identity when you lose. You become nothing.

But there is hope. The game provides the last lingering exemplification of the Horatio Alger myth, which people still seem to need to believe in. Teams that were big losers yesterday become big winners today—or tomorrow. Everyone *can* win—if only they make the effort, play the game, believe, are patient. Indeed, the sport is even structured so as to eventually re-

However discredited it may be, nothing rivals the old competitive code in spiritual pulling power.

store equilibrium: The big losers among the teams get first crack at the college draft picks. In that sense, the game is far more fair than, for example, the inheritance laws which tend to perpetuate inequality.

Grim tales: The game is fair; one might almost say it is a *fair*-ytale version of reality. And we *need* fairytales. It may seem strange to call professional football a fairytale (for both adults *and* children, as were the great fairytales of the past) because of its violence and brutality. But, then, remember how violent the Grimm Tales are. These classics are great precisely because catharsis comes out of terror instead of being achieved on the basis of escape from brutality. Unlike Disney's sweetened, sanitized scenarios, the classic fairytale functioned by working through the harshness, not by hiding from it.

The violence of professional football is outrageous. But so is the unnecessary violence in contemporary society. If we “accept” one, it makes it easier to accept the other. Professional football is better suited to this purpose than boxing or wrestling, let us say, because our real-life experience makes belief in the individual, lone hero, dif-

ficult. In a bureaucratized, corporatized world, *we*, too, function as part of a team. Of course, there are individual stars. But we all know, and the television announcers are at pains to repeat again and again, in good, democratic fashion, how important the linemen are to the forward motion of the ball.

Thus, professional football teaches “team spirit” and “democracy” (of sorts). There are, to be sure, the fouls. And there is a lesson to be learned here, as well: Don't get caught. There are players famed for their illegal brutalities. They get penalized—if caught...but rarely thrown out of the game. Indeed, the contest is waged not only against the opponents but, just as importantly, against the rules—to see how often and how greatly these can be stretched and violated in letter and/or spirit without getting penalized. It is little wonder that the game appeals so much to so many.

It would be nice to be able to point to an obvious moral in all of this. But none that is readily available is completely satisfying. Only the game itself remains satisfying. Should we “reform” pro football? The new rules will be as easily stretched or broken as the old. Should we ban professional football? Something similar will doubtless take its place, for the game speaks to or of our time. ■

Murray L. Bob is a writer whose work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Working Woman* and many other publications.

Posters of the WPA

By Christopher DeNoon
The Wheatley Press, University
of Washington Press, 176 pp., \$40

By Victor Margolin

The faces of poster modernism: art of the state; state of the art

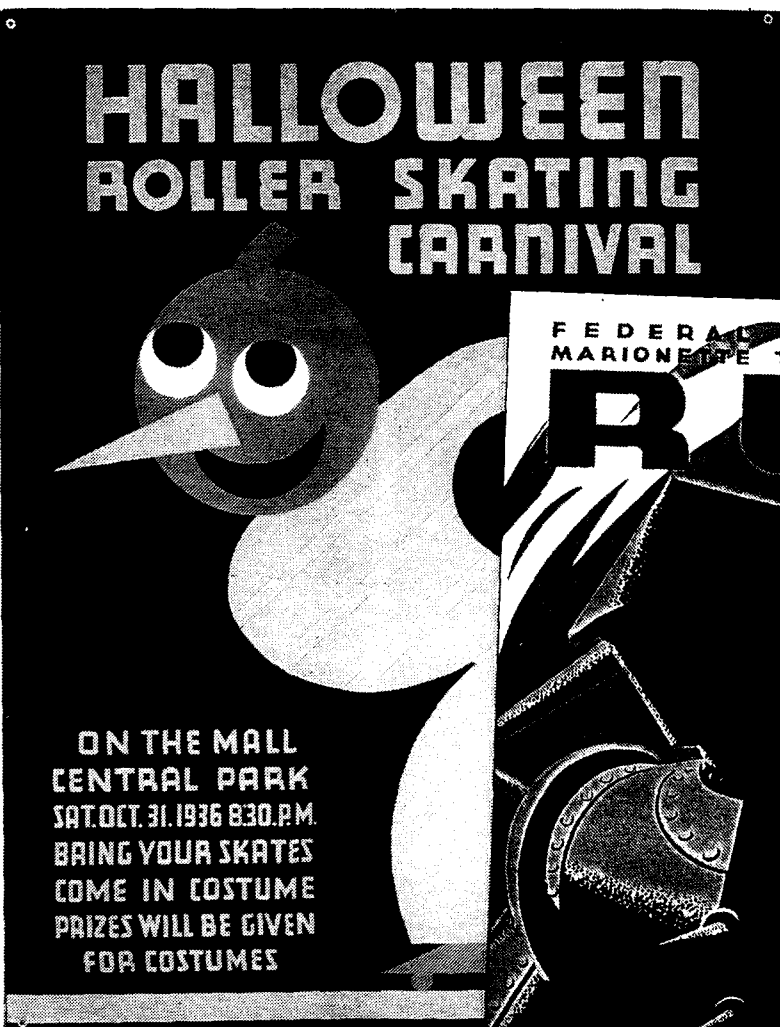
DURING THE DEPRESSION, THE Federal Art Project (FAP) of the Works Progress Administration (WPA) became America's largest employer of artists. Given the FAP's philosophy that art should be accessible to large numbers of people, it is not surprising that the FAP's Poster Divisions, located in at least 18 states, were an important part of the project. In the eight years of their existence, these units produced over 35,000 poster designs of which approximately 2,000 have survived.

Christopher DeNoon, in *Posters of the WPA*, writes that many posters and sketches were simply tossed out when the WPA agencies closed, rather than being given to museums and libraries. The loss of so much work is unfortunate since the WPA posters provide one of the few cases of American government sponsorship of a mass art form, comparable to the government sponsored poster programs of the Soviet Union in the '20s and '30s, Cuba in the '60s, and China in the '70s.

DeNoon's beautifully produced book documents many outstanding posters, mostly in color, and includes some background material about them. The posters are grouped in sections by subject matter with each section introduced by brief text. FAP clients were largely federal and local government organizations but also included private institutions such as art museums.

Wild styles: One section contains posters that promoted art exhibitions, not just by WPA artists but also by children, art students, and even Picasso. Another section shows posters that advertised productions of the Federal Theater Project, done in a fascinating range of styles for conventional as well as experimental productions. Posters designed for the U.S. Travel Bureau captured poetic images of Pennsylvania farmland, craggy mountains in Montana, and Lake Placid's steep bobsled run. Others depicted education and civic activity, health and safety messages, performances by the Federal Music and Dance Projects, and announcements for new books created by the Federal Writers Project.

Although most posters reproduced in the book were competently done, there was a wide stylistic variance. Some posters show the influence of modern European designers of the '20s and '30s such as A.M. Cassandre and Joseph Binder. Richard Floethe—who spent a year at the Weimar Bauhaus in the



The WPA's graphic cornucopia shows that economic devastation can stimulate artistic production—given the right kind of government support.



pamphlet that showed artists in poster units outside New York how to use it, posters were all hand lettered and painted, a process that

WPA

severely limited the artists' output. **Skippy text:** The introduction of the silkscreen process is but one of the interesting aspects of the WPA poster program that DeNoon

highlights. But often the reader is left wanting to know more. Compared to some of the other books on WPA projects such as Jerre Mangione's *The Dream and the Deal*; *The Federal Writers' Project, 1935-1943* and Karal Ann Marling's *Wall-to-Wall America: A Cultural History of Post-Office Murals in the Great Depression*, DeNoon's account is sketchy. The extreme diversity of styles and techniques used by the WPA poster artists invites more reflection on the relation between the images and the purposes they were used for as well as the varying artistic backgrounds that poster designers brought to their work.

In a brief essay intended to discuss the design aspects of the posters, Jim Heimann asserts that the WPA poster artists were breaking away from America's art traditions, redefining and applying contemporary European styles to come up with a style that was uniquely American. This is not supported by

Christopher DeNoon helps rescue some WPA genius from the dust-bin of history.

the mixture of images in the book. What the work suggests instead is that the artists had extremely different backgrounds, levels of talent, and orientations to modern and traditional precedents.

Francis V. O'Connor states in his introduction that the WPA posters were more daring than the murals because of their small scale and the immediacy of deadlines. Yet nothing is said in the text about how the commissions were negotiated with the respective clients. Were the artists completely at liberty to do what they wanted or did the clients introduce any restraints?

DeNoon also speaks generally about the range of political beliefs held by the WPA artists. It would be interesting to know more about the political views of particular artists and whether these influenced the styles they were attracted to. A few of the posters suggest an orientation to the heroic realism of the Soviet Union, while others draw from the European moderns and the latest images in American advertising. The author has done an excellent job of gathering and organizing these hitherto little-known posters, but the book raises more questions than it answers about how the Poster Divisions and the artists in them operated. Government sponsorship of a mass art form is too important a subject not to call for more research. ■

Victor Margolin teaches design history at the University of Illinois at Chicago.

IN THE ARTS

Siesta

Miles Davis, Marcus Miller
Warner Brothers

By Dean Robbins

Miles Davis' *Siesta* may be his overdue artistic wake-up call

JAZZ

AFTER BEING SIDELINED BY hip problems and bursitis in the late '70s, Miles Davis returned to jazz with a cold horn and a band that was barren of ideas. He released a string of funk-junk albums that made his five-year silence seem eloquent, culminating in the disgrace of 1986's *Tutu*.

It's tempting to expect better from the 61-year-old trumpeter, whose ceaseless self-renewal (like Thelonious Monk's eccentricity and Charlie Parker's death wish) is the stuff of jazz mythology. In every decade of his career, from 1949's *Birth of the Cool* to 1970's *A Tribute to Jack Johnson*, he came up with a fresh sound, a new emotional language. If all were right with the world, he would have risen from his sickbed in 1981 and focused this era's postmodern sprawl with a clarion blast of his horn.

Naptime for Miles? But for the first time his music has been diluted, and critics can't decide if his well has dried up or if he's merely courting the wider audience he's desired since the late '60s. His new album, a soundtrack from the movie *Siesta*, doesn't exactly solve the puzzle, since he has only an intermittent presence and often fades from the musical fragments like a ghost. And yet *Siesta* says a lot about the new Miles Davis, hinting at his ability—and willingness—to make another major statement.

It might seem unfair to look for clues in a hodgepodge of movie music, but Miles has actually used soundtracks for some of his grandest experiments. In 1957, his score for the French film *L'Ascenseur pour l'Echafaud* had a brooding modal flavor that pointed the way to the groundbreaking *Milestones*. And in 1970, his swaggering music for a Jack Johnson documentary was the peak of his great electric phase, which began with 1968's *Filles de Kilimanjaro*. In those days

Miles Davis' bold sound on *Siesta* suggests he may be ready for another quantum leap.

Miles had a vision, and even this work for hire became an organic part of his development.

The opening notes of *Siesta*—as the trumpet cries out on a windy plain—have got to delight any longtime Davis fan. Miles, the '80s funkster who's loath to look back, opts for a burnished tone and a Spanish mode that recall 1959's masterful *Sketches of Spain*. (The album is even dedicated to Gil Evans, the orchestrator of *Sketches*

and one of Miles' greatest collaborators.) After the sickly cast of recent albums, Miles' bold sound throughout *Siesta*—a sly acknowledgment of his classic period—suggests that he might be ready for a change.

Beyond technique: Another hopeful sign is the sheer confidence of Miles' phrasing. Since his flabby comeback effort on 1981's *The Man with the Horn* he's steadily toughened his embouchure, but

here he goes beyond mere technical competence, recapturing the majesty that's been absent in his '80s work. It's as though he suddenly remembered how to channel experience through the bell of his horn. His intonation has an edge of pain, tempered, as in the past, by tenderness. His inflections suggest the wisdom of a man who's been on top of the world as well as on the skids.

This kind of intense introspec-

tion—especially after a bout of illness or artistic stagnation—usually presages a major breakthrough for Miles. After recovering from heroin addiction in the early '50s, he created moody chamber music that foreshadowed the triumphs of *Kind of Blue* and *Porgy and Bess*. And after groping for a new direction in the mid '60s, he began the quiet electronic musings that exploded into funk-rock masterpieces like *Bitches Brew* and *Live-Evil*. *Siesta*, coming on the heels of his late '70s ailments and his current musical impasse, could be the calm before the next big storm.

Then again, it could be a false alarm. Miles generally draws inspiration from his sidemen, but Marcus Miller, who wrote the music for *Siesta* and plays most of the instruments, probably isn't the man to spark him in this phase of his career. Miller creates some striking melancholy moods; his writing here has far more depth than it did on *Tutu*. And yet the music is often stiff. Unlike Gil Evans' score for *Sketches of Spain*, Miller's arrangements lack spontaneity and don't really click with Davis' horn.

Siesta sends out mixed messages about Miles Davis. Although his playing is inspired, his collaboration with Miller implies a continuing fascination with mediocrity. It could be that he's still capable of making great music, but is tired of being a pathfinder. Perhaps he wants to take it easy in his old age with Miller's safe, accessible orchestrations.

But I wonder. Like his mentor Charlie Parker, Miles is an obsessive risk-taker who had the last laugh when critics counted him out in the '50s, '60s and '70s. I'd like to think that after feeling his way back into music throughout the '80s, he's finally gathered the strength to stun his detractors one more time. *Siesta* does unveil one big surprise—the poignant, newly expressive sound of Miles' horn—and that's reason enough to look forward to his next album. ■

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Dean Robbins is arts editor of the Madison, Wis., weekly *Isthmus*. His Jazz criticism has also appeared in the *Village Voice*.

Network failure: the way it is

Broadcast News

Directed by James L. Brooks

By Pat Aufderheide

JAMES BROOKS, THE FILM DIRECTOR who gave us the tear-jerker of the year with *Terms of Endearment* by dooming the heroine mid-movie, has now produced another smash hit. *Broadcast News*, the heart-warmer of the season, is a romantic

comedy where nobody gets the girl. Brooks seems to know something about modern romance.

Terms of Endearment was set in a mythical middle America, and sometimes its quirky, interesting characters seemed swaddled in social cliché. *Broadcast News* warmly and wittily snuggles into the world of talented young urban professionals, and it's dead-on accurate. The movie pirouettes on the anxieties and brilliance of people

hooked on stress and self-importance.

The location—a TV network's Washington, D.C. news bureau—is familiar ground to Brooks, who worked for years on *The Mary Tyler Moore Show* and *Lou Grant*. Jane (Holly Hunter) is the whiz-kid producer. She's together, tough and tender by turns on the job, but inside she's an emotional swamp. Her crying jags—carefully timed not to interfere with work—are a synop-

tic image of her lifestyle. Aaron (Albert Brooks, whose ability to irritate and charm at the same time is put to good use) is that genius-nerd from high school who grew up to be a pushy, pre-social, razor-sharp reporter. And Tom (William Hurt)

FILM

is the bubble-headed anchor with a heart of gold, who confesses to anyone who will listen that he doesn't understand half the news he reads, and doesn't deserve his good luck.

They're all in love with each

other, sort of. And they're all in love with their work, really. Nobody in the magic triangle is a bad guy. Although Tom incarnates, for Aaron—jealous on several scores—the devil who seduces news away from its hard-news edge, we come to see Tom as a skilled and disciplined performer, whose services are needed in a form that, after all, is also a performance art. Although Aaron's an insufferable wisecracker, he's also got integrity and talent. And Jane—generous to her friends, dedicated to her work, vulnerable and sturdy at once—may be the first profes-

sional heroine on screen in the yuppie era who's not a bitch by the end.

Nobody's a hero, either. Aaron's a rigid smartass, who blocks reality with his intelligence; Jane takes refuge from anxiety in stress addiction; and Tom's always going to be a patsy for fame and glory, even (or maybe especially) if it makes him feel unworthy.

But most important, nobody's an adult, until the grim news of mass layoffs forces them to make decisions. Jane and Aaron are buddies, kids cooking up conspiracies; Tom and Aaron can be like boys having a playground spitting fight; and Tom and Jane keep tripping over their own images of romance. They're all middle-class baby boomers who typically find the last hurdle into adulthood so hard, and workaholicism such a pleasant drug to avoid it.

Reality plus: The style is gently-exaggerated reality, occasionally showing its roots in TV sitcom energy. The exaggeration, though, punches up the reality, with scenes and dialogues designed with a fidelity to the kinds of passions bred

among news junkies. (No wonder this film is an addiction with media people; it shows them at their most irritating and most adorable, and embraces them for both.) It only moves into frank fantasy inside the homes of its characters.

There seems to be a rule in mainstream features that the characters' homes will be furnished in the style of the class one step up from their own social station,

Broadcast News pirouettes on the anxieties and brilliance of people hooked on stress and self-importance in a TV network's Washington, D.C. news bureau.

and *Broadcast News* puts a little twist on that rule. What's wrong about these characters' plush

homes is not that they wouldn't have enough money for them. It's that they're the kind of people who don't care as much about interior design and home rehab as they do about getting to the desk and on the plane.

Ethics and the news: *Broadcast News* is no message movie, but it does wait a few questions about network TV news our way, by framing its characters' arguments. Jane and Aaron would like to think of pretty-boy anchors as The Problem with TV News Today, and they both hammer on Tom for a reaction shot in which he tears up empathetically—a shot that's filmed after the interview.

But we see them as well seizing chances to twang the audience's heartstrings. In the opening scene, Jane inserts a poignant picture of a Norman Rockwell painting into footage that we've already seen and that evokes, in the raw material, no such image. At work with contras in Nicaragua, Jane and Aaron set up a symbolic closing shot that will leave a strong visual impact, and later bask in their boss' delight. We

can't help sympathizing with Tom when he complains that the line of journalistic ethics keeps sliding.

In fact all three are playing within a system that heavily prizes powerful emotional impact above useful information. And within that system, they're the kids and the money men are the grownups. In *Broadcast News*, the villain of the story of TV news is virtually hidden, behind the sentimental drama of three child-adults in search of satisfaction—but it's there, in the money managers. They're the ones who come down with the cutback news that shreds everyone's lives.

Bottom line: The story behind the cutbacks is also barely hinted at, but it's the same story as the one *Wall Street* bases its drama on: market speculation. Network news was already a shallow entertainment medium run by talented, frustrated, ambitious souls before 1982, when the Federal Communications Commission abolished its rule requiring new owners to hold on to stations for three years. Within four years half the TV and radio stations in the country had been bought and

sold, a quarter of them within three years and some of them overnight.

The sales jacked up prices, and put the bottom-line people in charge. One of their prime targets: news staffs. One of their solutions to the ratings race: more soft news and glitz. But speculation didn't ruin TV news, it only further weakened the slim claim the news could have to serving the public interest.

Broadcast News doesn't preach or prettify. It shows you what this moment in the news looks like to people inside it, already committed to playing the game. *Broadcast News* sits right on the edge of sentimental excess, but, true to its characters' complexities, it turns back just before a happy or tragic ending. Its ending is as incomplete as the personalities of its driven characters. The wistful note on which the movie ends is also an acknowledgement that these high-powered professionals shaping our news are dreamers channeling their dreams into bite-sized pieces of disposable entertainment. ■

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Wall Street
Directed by Oliver Stone

By Pat Aufderheide

IF OLIVER STONE'S NEW MOVIE *Wall Street* does nothing else, it shows you how hard it is to make pulp entertainment out of pulp reality.

The scandals that rocked Wall Street this year made headlines as lurid as a B-movie: young kids plummeted from millionaire high life to jail without ever fathoming what they'd done wrong; high-flyers like Ivan Boesky were swashbuckling pirates of the boardroom one day and common criminals the next; the balloon of stock prices grew to Goodyear-blimp proportions and then deflated to the size of a used condom.

Not many people in Hollywood even want to tackle the dramas that stare out of the headlines each day, and Stone's won some tough gambles before, with *Salvador* and *Platoon*, both of which turned raw real life into raw melodrama. And there's a vivid docudrama quality to *Wall Street*, which Stone wrote with Stanley Weiser.

Wall Street captures the game of speculation that recently ruined so many paper fortunes and continues to chisel into America's productive base. It's got characters whose mannerisms and tactics are stolen right out of ongoing lawsuits. You could watch the movie like a how-to briefing on insider trading and takeovers.

But Stone didn't make a docudrama. He made a melodrama about the collapse of ethics set against the backdrop of a romantic past in which the stock exchange provided the fuel for management and labor to build a strong nation 12 ways. As he's said in interviews,

Wall Street: little piggies go to market

"I'm ambivalent about capitalism. My father"—a stockbroker, to whom he dedicates the film—"used to say people need incentives, and I believe fundamentally in that fact."

Stone preaches a moral that carefully doesn't throw the capitalist baby out with the speculative bathwater. Greed is

FILM

bad, *Wall Street* says with sledgehammer emphasis; entrepreneurship is good. When greed-driven speculation destroys jobs and businesses, it also destroys souls, especially souls of aspiring entrepreneurs.

The movie is not about conflict in the present, especially not class conflict, so much as it is elegiac about the passing of an era when stockbrokers could be proud of their contribution to building American business. The Securities and Exchange Commission, with a welter of regulations sabotaged in the Reagan era, plays an unacknowledged role in this film. It's the guardian, not of a level playing field in a market grounded from the start on gambling principles, but of morality.

Gekko, the lizard king: Bud Fox (Charlie Sheen, a few pounds doughier than in his lead role in *Platoon*) is a nice boy whose union dad Carl (Martin Sheen, his real dad) works for an airline. Bud wants to make it big as a Wall Street broker, and he does—once he teams up with cutthroat financier

Gordon Gekko (Michael Douglas). Gekko teaches him the only real game in play, most of whose rules are illegal. That gives Bud pause, but only until he's swept away in a limousine with a cocaine queen. Playing the game, though, means wrecking Dad's airline, something Bud belatedly figures out (he's slow on the uptake generally). When he does, he saves the day but not his own skin, though he fleeces Gekko along the way.

Sounds like a topical gut-graber, and from the guy who wrote *Midnight Express* and *Scarface* you'd expect nothing less. But *Wall Street* never quite turns the corner of disbelief, and never quite integrates its soapbox moralizing into the action.

Nice Guys Finish Last: You can point to faults in the execution. For instance, as Charlie Sheen plays him, Bud's a dewy-eyed wimp. It's hard to believe a man like Gekko would seize upon him as a protege. And he comes with ethical hesitations that don't seem to have troubled the run-of-the-mill baby arbitrager in the least. (As Ken Auletta, who wrote a book about the phenomenon, noted recently in *Vanity Fair*, when he asked bankers "What wouldn't you do?" it was a brand-new question for most of them.)

The hortatory writing inserts mini-ethics lessons—"Know Thyself"; "Create, don't speculate"—into the middle of an electronic financial inferno. Many are delivered by the oracular old fart (Hal Holbrook) who haunts Bud's broker-

age (and presumably makes no money there). The female characters are improbable, especially poor Daryl Hannah as Manhattan's ditziest interior decorator. And as usual Stone goes in for overblown overstatement, such as dad Carl's heart attack.

What ultimately saps the energy from *Wall Street*, though, is that all the cards are with the villains, and the good guys are only victims. The oracular broker, who can remember when Wall Street was a place that fueled the enterprise of America, creating jobs for folks like Bud's dad, sounds like a ghost in the financial machine compared with Gekko, who proudly pits his greed against equally greedy but less competent competitors.

Just as ghostly is Bud's dad, who plays the martyr role. He's a grouchy saint as he sticks up for principles in the face of realities even his fellow union leaders will bend to. (Carl isn't good because he's a union man, but because he's the populist soul of productivity.) He's obstructionist not because it

Traders and traitors go to the wall in director Oliver Stone's timely melodrama of shakedowns and buyouts on The Street.

will work but because it's wrong to be in bed with guys like Gekko. You can't help but admire him at the moment he has his soliloquy on screen. But however noble, you know he's doomed. And his grimy,

hard-pressed, frustrated life is the perfect case for fleeing to white-collar jobs.

The villains have whatever fun there is to be had in the movie, but even that doesn't look fun enough. Michael Douglas is sexier here than in all his previous good-guy parts rolled into one, as the ruthless financier with a gargantuan appetite for all the best things in life. He gobbles them all so rapaciously, though, that there's no room left for others to share in the luxury, except in his chilly shadow. Stone makes spending ill-gotten money look like the work it often is, and the silliest moments of excess can't hold a candle to some of the riper scenes in *Scarface*.

Youth Betrayed: The figure for whom Stone reserves his sympathy—although it's hard for the audience to share it—is lost-soul Bud. Like the central character of *Platoon*, he's a young man faced with two father-figures, light and dark. Standing in the light leads to immolation on the pyre of principle, while going with the dark means sliding into immorality and alienation.

In *Wall Street*, Oliver Stone has offered the sternest indictment of crass and conscienceless greed in the financial community, and its effects on society, that we've seen in mainstream film. But as in *Platoon*, Stone seems less concerned with probing social conflict than with exercising his grief that the terms of male ritual—there war, here business—have been changed such that honor and success can't go hand in hand. He leaves us with a sour feeling of disgust for the filthy rich and a sense of helpless pity for Bud, the poor sap whose only self-redeeming gesture is to rat on his former patron. ■

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IN THESE TIMES JAN. 20-26, 1988 21

Trade

Continued from page 9

How did it play in Quebec?: Quebec is perceived as the battleground in the next federal election. Traditionally Quebec voters have supported the Liberal Party, but in the 1984 election they swung massively to the Conservatives. Yet as that government, and many of its Quebec cabinet ministers, became involved in an ongoing string of scandals, polls have shown increasing support for the New Democratic Party (NDP) in Quebec. So when the Meech Lake Accord was presented to the public, most politicians checked to see how the deal was playing in Quebec before assessing it. Liberal leader John Turner and NDP leader Ed Broadbent, neither of them noted advocates of decentralization, read the polls and threw their support to the accord.

This set the stage for Trudeau's brief, and dramatic, return to public life. In a major newspaper article he denounced the agreement for rendering "the Canadian state totally impotent," destined "eventually to be governed by eunuchs." A number of Quebec Liberals joined him in criticizing the deal, focusing on the designation of Quebec as a distinct society and the powers of appointment to the supreme court. National women's organizations were also concerned that the distinct society provision could be used to override the sexual equality rights in the federal constitution.

Social democrats, particularly Manitoba Premier Howard Pawley, began to question the limits on federal spending powers. In Canada, health, welfare and education are provincial responsibilities. But since World War II the federal government has moved into these areas, offering grants to the provinces on the condition that the money be used for specific programs. Several provinces, Quebec in particular, had objected to what they view as a form of federal blackmail and coercion.

But with the federal spending powers restricted many fear the outcome will be a checkerboard Canada, where some provinces provide full social services, while others provide substandard service and divert federal money to their own priorities. It has been suggested that under the proposed arrangement it would have been impossible for the federal government to introduce the type of national health insurance plan the country currently enjoys.

On the other hand, the Quebec wing of the NDP and the separatist *Parti quebecois* have both denounced the agreement as not going far enough in extending and affirming provincial powers. Certainly the two major provincial political parties view the accord as the bare minimum required for Quebec's endorsement of the constitution.

In the face of Trudeau's relentless centralism the Conservative party has become the party of regionalism. In 1979 then-Conservative leader Joe Clark expressed his vision of Canada as a "community of communities." At the time Trudeau ridiculed this as "shopping plaza federalism." If Mulroney manages to gain approval for his trade deal with the U.S., Canada may well turn into a confederation of shopping centers, but at least the price of goods in the malls will go down.

The last shopping trip: That is, in fact, one of the few sure things that can be said about the impact of the U.S.-Canada trade agreement: The price of U.S.-produced goods is going to drop. This will kill the long-running Canadian cultural tradition of the long weekend shopping trip to the U.S. No longer will it make sense to motor down to Plattsburg, Fargo or Bellingham to pick up a few shirts and a couple of bottles of booze.

Controversy over Canada's trade relationship with the U.S. goes back to the beginnings of the country's industrial strategy in the late 19th century. That strategy depended on construction of a government-financed transcontinental railway, government-induced settlement of the western territories, and government construction of a high tariff wall to protect domestic industry and force the new immigrants to buy from Canadian rather than American manufacturers. U.S. industries leapt the wall by establishing branch plants in Canada.

But in 1911 the country's Liberal government proposed a reciprocity treaty with the U.S. President William Taft noted with satisfaction that the agreement would make Canada "an adjunct of the U.S." However the Conservative Party wrapped itself in the Union Jack (Canada had no flag of its own until the mid-60s) and with the slogan "No truck nor trade with the Yankees," won that year's election.

World War II increased U.S. interest in a trade deal. But by the late 40's Mackenzie King, a Liberal with an extremely pro-American outlook—he got his start in life helping the Rockefellers improve their public image after the Ludlow massacre—concluded that

the Americans were interested in controlling "all of North America." As a result he scuttled a proposed trade agreement and destroyed most of the documents connected with it.

Since then various efforts have been made—some successful, some not—to develop sectoral trade agreements between the two countries. The most important is the Auto Pact, which guarantees Canada a share of the North American auto industry. At the same time the ongoing General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade has in fact helped to reduce the tariff wall between Canada and the U.S.

The leap of faith: At the heart of the current debate over free trade are non-tariff barriers—regional industrial incentives, government procurement policies, two-price energy policies and the treatment of foreign-owned firms.

Free trade was not an issue in the 1984 election that brought Mulroney to power. In fact as late as 1983 he was quoted as saying "Don't talk to me about free trade. That issue was decided in 1911. Free trade is a danger to Canadian sovereignty. You will hear none of it from me."

Then came the report of the Macdonald Royal Commission on the Canadian economy, and all of a sudden Canadians started hearing a lot from Mulroney about free trade. Headed by former Liberal finance minister Donald Macdonald, a member of that party's right wing, the commission urged the government to make a "leap of faith," and negotiate a free trade agreement with the U.S. as a way of reviving the Canadian economy.

Since nearly 80 percent of Canada's foreign trade is with the U.S., the prospect of an increasingly protectionist U.S. Congress led the Mulroney government to open trade talks. The key objective was supposed to be the creation of a binding dispute settlement mechanism, one that would exempt Canada from what were seen as unfair U.S. trade remedy laws. Through the negotiations the Congress continued to use punitive trade laws against a variety of Canadian resource industries.

But after a year and a half of negotiations Mulroney has produced a very different sort of deal. The dispute mechanism can only determine whether or not U.S. trade laws have been properly applied. And as yet there is no exemption from the omnibus trade bill currently winding its way through Congress.

On the other hand Canada has made some major concessions. There will be a continental energy market. The government has ceded its right to screen U.S. investment in

the country. And American banks and brokerage houses will be allowed access to the Canadian market.

From the beginning the talks were opposed by economic nationalists who feared that free trade would erode the country's sovereignty. James Laxer, a former candidate for the leadership of the New Democratic Party in 1971, warned that trying to create the sort of "level playing field" American trade negotiators demanded would threaten Canada's incomplete social assistance network. "This country's more expensive social programs would wither, under the ceaseless pressure to keep our economy competitive with regions to the south where such programs are not in place." Employers who objected to the costs of such programs would now be free to move to sunnier, less generous climates.

Since the accord was reached in October there has been heated debate in Canada over its impact. Chief negotiator Simon Reisman has called opponents of the deal cowards and compared them to the Nazis. The prime minister predicts the creation of 350,000 new jobs thanks to the agreement, while critics claim it could lead to de-industrialization as branch plants fold up their shops and return home and local industries are overrun by American competition.

In parliament the NDP has been the major opponent of the agreement. After a period of indecision the Liberals have also vowed to repudiate the deal if elected. A Pro-Canada Network has also been created to campaign against the agreement. One of its chief representatives is Bob White, the president of the Canadian Auto Workers, the union that broke away from the UAW earlier in the decade. White calls free trade the beginning of a "Rambo, dog eat dog, survival of the fittest society."

The premier of Ontario—the country's most populous and industrialized province—the premiers of Manitoba and Prince Edward Island, two of the smallest provinces, all oppose the deal. The premiers of Quebec and Alberta, two of the major energy exporters, fervently support the agreement since it will free them from the regulatory control of the federal government and allow them to sell off their resources as fast as possible, at whatever price they want. In short the agreement has exacerbated the country's regional tensions.

And the polls show the Tories coming out of the cellar, where they have spent the past two years. The NDP, which rocketed to the top of the polls last year, is back in third place while the Liberals are in first place with a very unpopular leader. The opposition parties have been calling for an election on free trade for the past year—if the trends in public opinion continue the way they have for the past two months they may just get one.

The issues—if not the answers—in such an election will be clear. Canadians must not only decide how regionalized a country they want, they must determine to what degree the powers of any government—regional or central—will be turned over to the market. Finally, voters will have to ask themselves how much they are willing to sacrifice to preserve the option of developing differently than the U.S.

Until now the skill of Canadian politicians has lain not in answering these questions, but in rephrasing them. This could be the year electors end all these follies. □

Doug Smith is a Winnipeg journalist and broadcaster.

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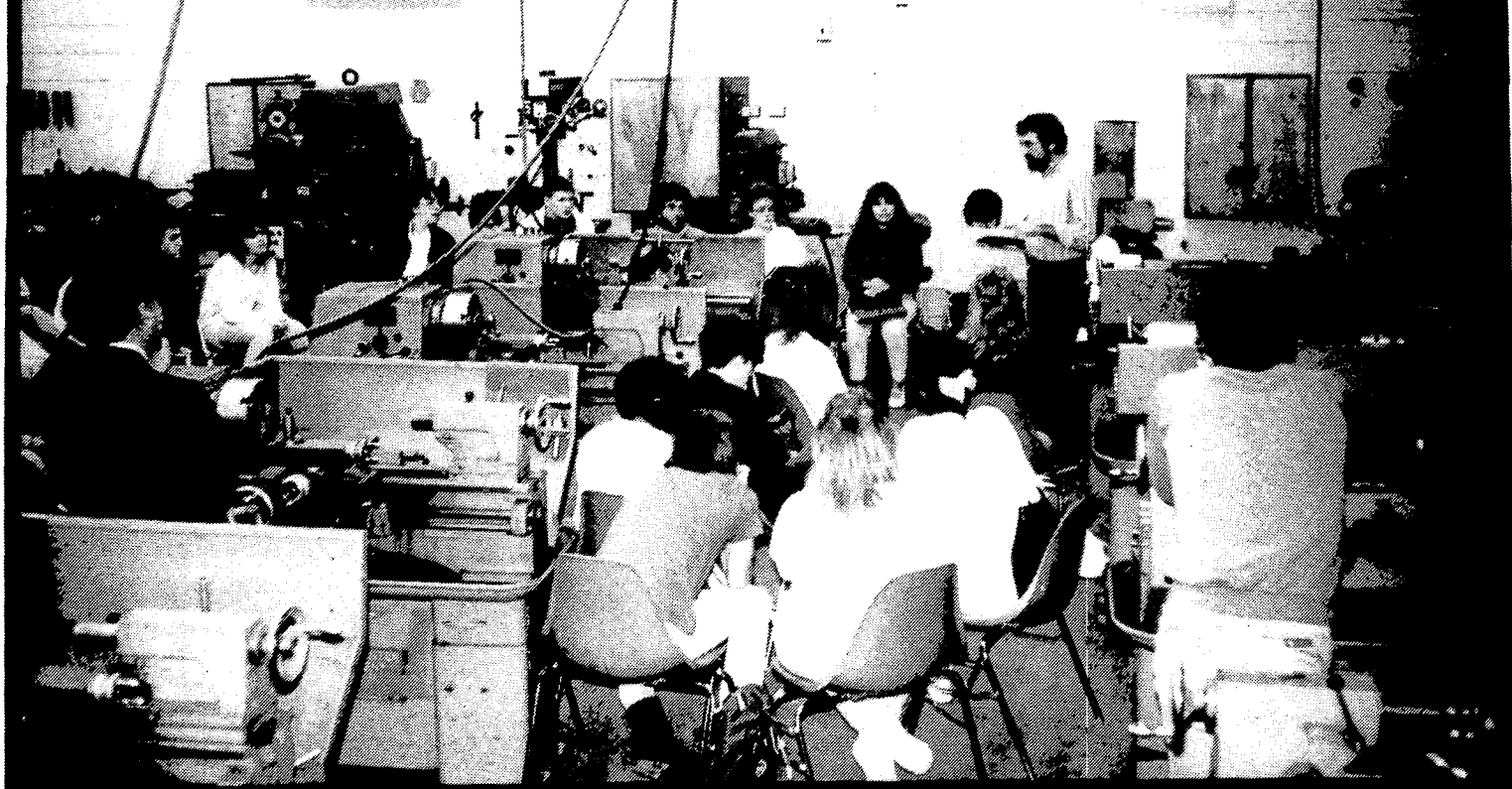
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The Work Taboo



DOUG SMITH

Canadian poet Tom Wayman confronts the wall of sullen teen-age resentment—and sometimes breaks through.

By Doug Smith

WINNIPEG

TOM WAYMAN, CANADA'S LEADING PROponent of work writing is on the job. He's hard at it in the middle of a large machine shop. He looks tense and intense; the job at hand demands all of his concentration. But the machines are all silent.

He's not there to plane or shave metal. The Vancouver-based poet is in this high school machine shop to give a reading. Drawing from his anthologies of poetry about work, he tries catching the students with poems about flipping burgers at McDonald's, deep-sea fishing, giving birth or the violent attitudes that attach themselves to industrial labor. He gets a few laughs, a few strange looks...but an audience of teen-agers isn't going to give anything away easily.

Afterward we talk about it. The teachers assure us that it was a hit, one of the best poetry readings ever in the school. Wayman comments that for the first 20 minutes most school readings are just like "pushing against a wall of sullen resentment. If these kids are sure of anything, it's that poetry has nothing to do with their lives."

The great taboo: Much of Wayman's seemingly boundless energy is dedicated to helping create and promote a literature that is connected to the daily lives of working-class high school students. And he appears to be riding a crest of what in the world of contemporary poetry could be called success. His most recent book, *The Face of Jack Munro*, has been nominated for a British Columbia book award; *Going for Coffee*, his third anthology of work poems, has just gone into a second printing; and another anthology and another book of his own poems are also in the works.

Although he writes about the standard themes—"love, death, nature and all that," it is through his work-related poems that Wayman has attained his particular status in Canadian literature. Ever since his work was first published in the mid-'70s he has concentrated on what he sees as the "big taboo in literature—work."

"In our society we have a pathological avoidance of looking at what happens to people in the workplace. I was at the Canadian Booksellers Association annual meeting in 1986. They had these miles and miles of books and it struck me—there were no books on work—I don't mean no literature books on work, but I mean none. You had books on postage stamps, butterflies, famous actors...any subject you could care to name except the subject that involves most Canadians for most of their time awake."

Split shift: Wayman sees himself as part of a growing movement of international work writers. In conversation he is continually referring to kindred spirits—be they fellow members of the Vancouver Industrial Writers Union, novelist and filmmaker John Sayles or American poets and tradespeople like Sue Doro and Susan Eisenberg.

A key event for this movement was the 1986 Split Shift Conference in Vancouver, which drew more than 20 writers, editors and publishers who are active in the work writing movement.

"Because it was the first time many of the people had got together, there was a kind of show-and-tell attitude to the whole thing. People were rather amazed just to discover each other and what they were doing." The conference gathered people from *Processed World* magazine, "who feel that most work is useless and stupid," together with women who are establishing themselves in trades and writing about their experiences,

and poets like Jim McLean who has spent most of his life working on the Canadian rail system.

Not speaking for anybody: Wayman sees the new work writing as being a departure from the socially conscious writings of the '20s and '30s in a number of significant ways. It is almost always personal. "I try to focus on myself, because when I first started writing work poems people started saying—this guy is speaking for people in the workforce—and I said, 'No, I am speaking about my own experience.' The whole idea of the new work writing is that we are not speaking for anybody. The workplace is full of individuals. Those individuals act in concert sometimes and sometimes they are bitterly opposed—that is the reality."

Despite this a rich picture of working-class life emerges from Wayman's poems—a world illuminated by strange and wonderful flashes of humor and determination. A regular reader of his poems over the years might be forgiven for thinking that Wayman regularly takes on blue-collar jobs to research various workplaces. In fact he has been an itinerant academic for the past decade, working in community colleges and universities, mainly in British Columbia.

"I have never taken a job except for money. Because if you did it any other way you would be the only person in the plant there for that reason." He quit his last grunt-and-groan job in a truck factory in 1974. "But I return to blue-collar experiences for metaphors—mining it, the way James Joyce all his life wrote about 1904 Dublin. So I keep going back to those experiences."

Daily schizophrenia: In his most recent work Wayman is moving onto new ground, while not abandoning his work writing. Much of *The Face of Jack Munro* deals with the failed

1983 British Columbia General Strike. Other poems are what Wayman sees as overviews of contemporary worklife. According to Wayman, they deal with "the whole concept of why we are not free at work and what our unfreedom on the job, back-to-back with being a free citizen as soon as you are off the job, what that kind of daily schizophrenia does to people."

"You cross that factory gate or office door and it is like time travel—back to when people like you and I did not have the vote, had to shut up and obey orders and so on. As soon as you cross back outside you are expected to be this free responsible adult citizen, in whose hands the destiny of nations lie. It is a kind of schizophrenia that accounts for much of the weirdness in contemporary society and points to a whole area where I think the next set of struggles has to be if the human race is ever going to go forward."

It is, he says, like being a writer in the Renaissance. "Everytime you pick up a pen to tackle these subjects, in many cases you are the first person in the history of the English language to write about these things. It puts a tremendous responsibility on you—you better not fuck it up. But it is exciting. That's why I think it is a movement and why it will continue to grow, even if it stops this time, or falls asleep for 50 years. I don't think you can stop the human race from discussing what they mostly do all day."

Tom Wayman's books are available in the U.S. through Spring Church Book Company, Spring Church, Pa., and Left Bank Books, Seattle, Wash.

Doug Smith is a Winnipeg journalist and broadcaster.

Tom Wayman finds that writing about work is perhaps the most thankless job of all.